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ABSTRACT

In fall 1987, a study was conducted by the Learning Assessment Retention Consortium (LARC) to closely inspect the reading courses and programs currently offered in the California community colleges. All 106 community colleges in the state were surveyed regarding testing instruments used, the number and level of reading courses offered, entry and exit criteria, and course content. Study findings, based on responses from 62 colleges, included the following: (1) the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, Stanford Diagnostic (Blue), and the ASSET test were the tests used most often for course placement; (2) 77% of the reporting colleges offered reading courses at the 0-4th grade level, 84% at the 4th-7th grade level, 98% at the 8th-10 grade level, and 87% at the 10th-12th grade level; (3) 32% of the colleges offered a degree-applicable course in critical/analytical reading; (4) the three major program models were individualized reading programs leading to classroom instruction at higher levels, classroom-lab and individualized instruction spanning all levels, and classroom or classroom-lab only; (5) in all colleges, students were placed in reading courses using standardized reading tests, though initial placement could be refined by reading instructors; (6) vocabulary improvement was treated at all levels of reading instruction; (7) some aspects of reading comprehension were treated in all courses at the 4th grade through college levels; and (8) in the higher level courses, greater focus was placed on critical thinking and analytical skills, while in the middle level courses, study skills, vocabulary, and comprehension were treated and the lowest level courses emphasized phonics and spelling in addition to other skills. The survey instrument is appended. (WJT)

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Curriculum Study in Reading

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Learning Assessment Retention Consortium

March, 1989

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Curriculum Study In Reading

A Study of the

Learning Assessment Retention Consortium

with the support of the

English Council of California Two-Year Colleges

and the

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

This study was funded by the
California Community College Chancellor's Office
and
The Learning Assessment Retention Consortium.

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Foreword

Increasing student success is a major goal of the California community colleges. This goal is also the focus of LARC, the Learning Assessment Retention Consortium. Members of the network--formed in 1981 and including 80 colleges--share a common purpose: to translate concern about students' success into local action. From the beginning, LARC has identified research as a major priority and a critical link in accountability.

The *Curriculum Study in Reading* was conceived and sponsored by LARC in cooperation with the English Council of Two-Year Colleges and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. This study was funded by the California Community College Chancellor's Office and LARC. It was conducted as a follow-up to the *LARC: Student Outcomes Study in Reading* since a discussion of outcomes is incomplete without a description of the curricula which contribute to those outcomes.

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Curriculum Study In Reading
Abstract

The *Curriculum Study in Reading* was conducted to closely inspect the reading courses and programs currently offered in the California community colleges. More specifically, this study analyzes testing instruments used, the number and level of reading courses offered at responding institutions, entry and exit criteria, and course content.

Six major objectives of this study were to (1) identify the tests used for placing students in reading courses offered at specified levels, refining initial placement in courses, and placing students in other subject area courses, (2) describe the range of offerings and grade level parameters of courses/programs available to students scoring in the three percentile groups described in the LARC Student Outcomes Study, (3) identify the transfer, AA/AS Degree, non-AA/AS Degree, or non-credit status of courses offered, (4) describe the most typical configurations of college reading programs, (5) describe the entrance and exit criteria established for the courses offered, and (6) identify the major skill areas and subskills treated in courses at specific levels.

It was found that the reading tests used most often for placement and refinement are the Nelson-Denny, Stanford Diagnostic (Blue), and the ASSET. Most colleges offer reading courses at some remedial and developmental levels, but less than half of the colleges offer reading courses at the college level and almost a third omit offerings at the lowest level(s) through the regular reading programs. Three major program configurations or models emerged, the first two of which incorporate some blend of individualized and classroom offerings. The third model incorporates classroom or classroom-lab instruction only and, when implemented in some of the colleges, eliminates offerings at the college and/or lower levels. In all colleges, students are placed in reading courses using standardized reading tests although initial placement may be refined by reading instructors. Exit standards for reading courses are comprised of several indices; in some colleges, one exit criterion is a specified grade level on a standardized instrument. In terms of course content, vocabulary improvement is treated at all levels of reading instruction and some aspects of comprehen-

sion are treated in all courses at the 4th through college range. At the higher levels, greater focus is placed on critical thinking/analytical skills; in the middle range of offerings, some aspect(s) of study skills is treated as well as vocabulary and comprehension; and at the very lowest level, much emphasis is placed on phonics and spelling in addition to other skills.

Certain questions in areas of assessment, range of offerings, program configuration and other comparison variables were raised including: "Are some tests used for placement purposes more accurate than other, and are some more appropriate for certain student populations?" "Should there be a closer match between the scores attained on the placement instruments and the beginning grade level parameters specified for the reading courses in which students are placed?" "Should a standardized test be included in the set of exit criteria for reading courses, and should performance levels on the tests match the end grade level parameters specified for the reading courses?" "Should a standardized reading test be used to determine eligibility for an AA/AS Degree?" "If so, what grade level should be required for graduation?" "Does one model or program configuration serve students more effectively than others?" Finally, further research needs to be conducted to address other important variables not incorporated in the study such as methodology and techniques, material and equipment used, staffing patterns and staff preparedness, and number of contact hours and students served per hour.

Curriculum Study In Reading
Executive Summary

Background of the Study

The Curriculum Study in Reading was conducted to closely inspect the reading courses and programs currently offered in the California community colleges. More specifically, this study analyzes testing instruments used, the number and level of reading courses offered at responding institutions, entry and exit criteria, and course content.

The objectives of this Curriculum Study in Reading are to (1) identify the tests used for placing students in reading courses offered at specified levels, refining initial placement in courses, and placing students in other subject area courses, (2) describe the range of offerings and grade level parameters of courses/programs available to students scoring in the three percentile groups described in the LARC Student Outcomes Study, (3) identify the transfer, AA/AS Degree, non-AA/AS Degree, or non-credit status of courses offered, (4) describe the most typical configurations of college reading programs, (5) describe the entrance and exit criteria established for the courses offered, and (6) identify the major skill areas and subskills treated in courses at specific levels.

A research committee, consisting of representatives of the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges (ECCTYC), the Learning Assessment Retention Consortium (LARC), and the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges, developed the reading curriculum survey which was submitted to 106 community colleges in California. Sixty-two colleges (58%) completed and returned the survey in the Fall of 1987 indicating their reading program configuration and procedures as well as specific course content as of that time.

Nature and Overview of Reading Programs

Tests Used

- Tests are used in all participating colleges to place students into different levels of reading courses/programs.

- In forty-one (66%) of the reporting colleges, tests are used to refine placement in reading courses.
- In forty-one (66%) of the reporting colleges, tests are used to place students in other subject area courses.
- Tests most commonly used for the purposes specified are the Nelson-Denny, the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue), and the ASSET.

Courses Offered at Specified Levels

- Colleges vary in what reading course offerings they make available to students, particularly with regard to range of offerings, course/program grade level parameters, and the type of credit associated with courses at the same or similar levels.
    - Twenty-eight (45%) of the reporting colleges offer a course(s) in speed reading. At most of these colleges, this coursework is both transferable and degree applicable.
    - Twenty (32%) of the reporting colleges offer a course(s) in critical/analytical reading. This coursework is both transferable and degree applicable at all of these colleges.
    - Fifty-four (87%) of the reporting colleges offer reading course(s) at the 10-12th grade level range. At most of these colleges coursework at this level is degree applicable but non-transferable.
    - Sixty-one (98%) of these colleges offer reading coursework at the 8-10th grade level range. Coursework at this level is often non-degree applicable.
    - Fifty-two (84%) of the reporting colleges offer reading courses at the 4-7th grade level range. Generally, coursework at this level is non-degree applicable.
    - Forty-eight (77%) of the reporting colleges offer reading courses at the 0-4th grade level range. At most of these colleges, courses in this range

are non-degree applicable; some colleges offer courses at this level on a non-credit basis.

- Twenty-two (35%) of the reporting colleges specified that individualized reading programs spanning several grade levels such as 0-7, 0-12 are offered on their campuses. Individualized programs were included in the numbers/percentages reported above.
- Associated with many of the classroom offered reading courses are reading labs which also meet the need for individualization.
- Not all colleges offer the full range of offerings, 0 through college level, often excluding coursework at the lowest levels, 0-4th and 4-7th grade levels. A large percentage of students taking reading courses, however, enter college scoring in the 0-7th grade level range, as evidenced in the *LARC: Student Outcomes Study in Reading*. This study indicates that ". . . of the largest test group, the Stanford Diagnostic group, 60% of the students in the total sample fell within the lowest level percentile group, compared to 25% of the national norming group of twelfth graders. The proportion of students in this lowest level group for all individual Stanford Diagnostic samples ranged from 39% to 99%. These California community college remedial reading students placed very low in reading ability relative to national twelfth graders. The proportions of students in this lowest level group for the eight NJBSCT colleges ranged from 11% to 65%. The colleges in the sample are very diverse, in this instance, according to student skills levels, as well as other student characteristics."

Program Configuration

- Three major patterns or models of overall program configuration are apparent:
    - Model I -- Individualized to Classroom Offerings. With this model, reading instruction is provided through individualized reading programs, usually spanning the entire range, 0 through college level, and classroom or classroom-lab offerings are made available, usually beginning at the 8th or 10th grade level. Students who enter with low reading scores receive

only individualized instruction. Upon reaching the level of the first classroom offering in the sequence, students receive further reading instruction in the classroom; however, some of the students may receive additional reading instruction through the individualized programs instead.

- Model II -- Classroom-lab *and* Individualized Instruction Spanning All Levels. In this model, colleges offer reading instruction across the entire range, 0 through college, in both individualized and classroom based courses, providing students flexibility and a greater number of options.
- Model III -- Classroom or Classroom-lab Instruction Only. In some colleges reading coursework is offered only through the classroom or classroom-lab. In this model, reading coursework may not be made available across all levels; offerings at the lowest level(s) and/or the college level frequently are omitted.

- Of the 23 colleges which participated in both the LARC Student Outcomes Study in Reading and in the Curriculum Study in Reading, eight (35%) clearly offer programs which correspond with Model I; five (22%) offer reading programs corresponding with Model II; and 10 (43%) offer programs which correspond with Model III. These findings, attained from a follow-up questionnaire sent to the 23 colleges considered to be representative of all 106 colleges, indicate that the percent of colleges offering reading instruction through individualized programs/courses at some level(s) is higher than that reported in the reading curriculum surveys returned for this study (57% as opposed to 35%).

Entrance and Exit Criteria

- For placement into reading courses, the most common assessment instruments used are the Nelson-Denny, the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue), and the ASSET.
- The entrance cut-off score for college level reading courses typically ranges from 10.0 to 12.0. In courses at this level, about a third of the colleges pretest and posttest students to measure skill growth using the Nelson-Denny.

- Entrance cut-off scores range from grade levels 7.0 to 11.8 for 10-12th level courses and from 6.0 to 8.9 for 8-10th level courses. Both pretesting and posttesting are conducted at two-thirds of the colleges to measure skill growth using the Nelson-Denny.
- Entrance cut-off scores typically range from grade levels 2.0 or 3.0 to 7.0 for courses at the 4-7th grade level. Entrance cut-off scores for courses at the 0-4th grade levels are usually not specified. Pretesting and posttesting are conducted at half the colleges which frequently use the Nelson-Denny and the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue) to measure skill growth.
- The following can be stated regarding exit standards for reading courses:
    - the instructor determines the exit standard in about a third of the colleges;
    - the department determines the exit standard in a third of the colleges for courses below the college level, and 13% of the colleges report that the department determines the exit standard for college level courses;
    - criteria used for exit include a specified grade level on a standardized test, satisfactory completion of all course and lab assignments, a passing grade of "C" or better in the course, and improvement in reading ability measured in other ways;
    - the final grade for courses at the college level is based mostly on class assignments and exams; designated grade level scores on a standardized instrument may also be required or allowed.
    - the final grade for courses at the 10-12th level is based mostly on a department exit exam, but class assignments and class exams count heavily as well;
    - the final grade for courses at the 8-10th level is split evenly between department exit exams, class assignments, and instructor class exams;
    - the final grade for courses at the 4-7th level is based mostly on class assignments and class exams;

- the final grade for courses at the 0-4th level is based mostly on department exit exams, but class assignments and exams weigh heavily as well.

- Exit standards for courses at the various levels specified are not uniform within many colleges and vary greatly across colleges. Within some colleges much latitude appears to be extended in terms of reading levels demonstrated by students upon course completion and end grade level parameters specified for reading courses.

- While the data regarding the reading requirement for the AA/AS Degree does not appear to be fully reliable, it indicates that some colleges accept completion of a reading-composition course, which may or may not be the standard freshman composition course, as meeting the reading requirement. A number of colleges allow either completing a specified course or passing a proficiency exam to meet the graduation requirement. If passing a standardized reading instrument is required for the AA/AS Degree, then the most frequently designated score is 13.0.

Reading Course Content

- Much concurrence is found across colleges regarding course content emphasized at specified levels. Skill areas emphasized are those expected for coursework at the levels reported.

- Courses at the 8-12 range address nearly all subskills listed in the survey with major emphasis placed in areas of comprehension, study skills, vocabulary, fluency, figurative language, and critical thinking. Depending on the level of the offering, certain skill areas are given higher priority than others, with critical thinking and figurative language receiving major emphasis in the 10-12 range, but not in offerings at the 8-10 range. Courses in the latter range focus primarily on major aspects of vocabulary and comprehension as well as Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review (SQ3R), a major study skill. Phonics, spelling, and grammar and mechanics do not receive major emphasis in coursework in the 8-12 range.

- Courses at the college level address fewer subskills than those in the 8-12 range; most emphasize critical thinking, comprehension, fluency, figurative language, and SQ3R.

- Courses at the lowest level, 0-4, focus on fewer subskills than those in the 8-12 range also; most emphasize phonics (word attack and structural analysis of words), vocabulary, and spelling. Courses at the 4-7th grade level emphasize phonics and vocabulary, too, but comprehension is emphasized instead of spelling.
- Other aspects of content which can be noted are these: 1) figurative language and/or vocabulary development are emphasized in reading at all levels, 0 through college; 2) some comprehension subskills are emphasized in reading coursework at the 4 through college range; 3) grammar and mechanics are not emphasized in reading courses at any level.

Conclusions, Implications, and Further Questions

Among the key questions raised regarding assessment, range of offerings, program configuration, and entrance and exit criteria are the following:

(1) Do some of the placement tests available on the market yield more accurate information than others, given similar or equally matched groups of students?

(2) Are the reading offerings made available to students scoring in the lowest percentile range sufficient to meet their needs?

(3) Given similar or matched groups of students, is one program configuration, including the blend of offerings or options, course parameters, and range of offerings, more effective than another in terms of student gains and success in content area coursework taken later?

(4) Would reading instruction be more effective as well as performance in the course at the next level if a closer match were reached between students' demonstrated performance on placement tests and the beginning grade level parameters of the reading courses in which the students are placed?

(5) Would reading instruction be more effective as well as performance in the course at the next level if a closer match were reached between the end performance levels demonstrated by students and the end grade level parameters specified for the reading courses in which they are enrolled?

(6) Would reading instructors be in a better position to evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction if they measured the gains made by their students using the standardized instruments available?

(7) Should a reading test be used to determine eligibility for the AA/AS Degree? If so, what grade level/raw score should be attained to meet the graduation requirement?

This study, in describing the general features of reading programs Throughout the state, is intended to encourage further examination. Useful future studies would examine variables related to program quality and outcomes. The findings provided in this study should facilitate and prompt that research.

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Chapter I

THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Background Of The Study

In the late 70's and early 80's, community colleges began shifting emphasis from growth to quality. This shift demanded a reassessment of purpose and a renewed commitment to serve underprepared students while maintaining academic excellence and yet increasing student retention. Particularly at this time, the literature was replete with reports and accounts addressing the issues of underpreparedness, recruitment, and retention while focusing at the same time on academic excellence. In surveys conducted at this time, poor academic preparation among entering freshmen was often cited as a problem needing attention. Not only was underpreparedness an issue addressed by the community colleges, but four-year institutions, both public and private, expressed the same concern, in many instances focusing on inadequate preparation in reading and study skills. When UC, Berkeley found that the ability to learn from text, background knowledge, and attitude toward learning better predicted freshmen success than their entrance tests, they designed and implemented EL90, a course to assist students with studying textbook material effectively. Another demonstration of concern for underprepared entering freshmen at a four-year institution was initiation of the five-week Project SOAR at Xavier University, New Orleans. In this case, the concern was for minority students intending to enroll in science courses. Most of the participants were 17 or 18 year old high school graduates. In the morning they attended laboratory sessions in various sciences. Their afternoons were devoted to improving their analytical reading and reasoning by working with problem solving/critical thinking material and reading comprehension exercises from various sources. A follow-up study revealed that SOAR participants were twice as likely as other Xavier students to complete their freshmen science classes.

These are but two of the many examples which can be cited demonstrating interest in helping underprepared students succeed in four-year institutions. In two-year institutions, the problem was noted as being even more severe. Often, these institutions indicated that at least one-third or more of their incoming students needed further improvement in

reading instruction as well as instruction in the other essential skills prior to or concurrent with successful completion of academic and vocational coursework. Clearly then, the need for reading instruction in postsecondary institutions has been well established by researchers, college administrators and faculty across the nation. Thus, colleges have implemented reading courses and programs at all levels over the past several decades to meet this need.

Today, most institutions continue to offer incoming students reading programs and, in fact, require some students at certain sites to take them. Recently, attention has been directed at the quality, effectiveness, and expediency of these programs. The California Community College Chancellor's Office has taken action to strengthen the curriculum in reading, writing, and mathematics in California's 106 community colleges. The Matriculation Plan mandates assessment in all three of these basic skill areas. In addition, the new Title V criteria for all associate degree credit courses require that material used in these courses be at the college level. Furthermore, the Master Plan Commission indicated that California community colleges must improve the probability for success for every student by making learning more meaningful and demanding and by better defining and communicating the expected outcomes of a community college education. This commission, together with the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), is in the process of redefining curriculum standards, teacher excellence, and student success. This same rigor, being applied to all credit courses, must also be applied to all reading instruction as well, if educational equity and increased retention, goals of *The Master Plan Renewed* (July, 1987), are to be attained.

Not only are California's educators concerned about offering quality programs to underprepared students, they are equally, if not more concerned about the underrepresentation of Hispanics, Blacks, and Native Americans in California's postsecondary institutions highlighted by recent studies of the rapidly changing demographics of the state. By the year 2010, current underrepresented minorities are projected to become the "new majority" with Whites declining as a proportion of the total population from a current 61.9% to less than 50%. As the population of minorities in California increases, so will the number of minorities who are often underprepared for college-level work seeking a higher education.

The impact of the changing demographics in California is of paramount importance to its institutions of higher learning, particularly the community colleges in which many of these students first enroll for higher education. This factor serves to sharpen the focus on the reading offerings and future plans.

In light of these developments, it seems imperative to closely inspect the reading programs currently offered in the community colleges. This also seems a logical first step if the objectives and mission of the California community colleges as outlined in the new master plan are to be met. In 1987-88, the California Community College Chancellor's Office and the College Board funded a study on students enrolled in reading in the community colleges implemented by the Learning Assessment Retention Consortium (LARC). LARC studied three outcomes as measurements of student success:

(1) student persistence in courses and in college
(2) student satisfaction
(3) skills acquisition in the courses

The results of that study are reported in *LARC: Student Outcomes Study In Reading*, September, 1988.

This curriculum study in reading was designed in conjunction with the LARC outcomes study to closely inspect the reading courses and programs currently offered in the California community colleges. This study reports on the testing instruments used, the number and level of reading courses offered at responding institutions, entry and exit criteria, and course content.

Purpose of the Study

The objectives of this curriculum study in reading are to (1) identify the tests used for placing students in reading courses offered at specified levels, refining initial placement in courses, and placing students (requisite) in other subject area courses, (2) describe the range of offerings and grade level parameters of courses/programs available to students scoring in the three percentile ranks specified in the LARC Student Outcomes Study, (3) identify the transfer, AA/AS Degree, non-AA/AS Degree, or non-credit status of courses

offered, (4) describe the most typical configurations of college reading programs, (5) describe the entrance and exit criteria established for the courses offered, and (6) identify the major skill areas and subskills treated in courses at specific levels.

This study was developed through the collaborative efforts of the Learning Assessment Retention Consortium (LARC), the English Council of California Community Two-Year Colleges (ECCTYC), and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

It is intended that this descriptive study serve as a basis for discussion regarding the structure of reading programs and types of courses offered to students in the California community colleges. Perhaps this identification of tests used and courses offered, description of program configurations, reading course entrance and exit criteria, and course content will assist those in reading departments with their own program evaluation.

Limitations of the Study

This study represents a major effort in California to describe the reading programs offered through its community colleges. This study attempts to describe the configuration, procedures, and content of the programs offered and through the process identify the patterns or models most frequently implemented.

This study does not attempt to compare reading program patterns or models in terms of their effect on student outcomes. The study's survey did not gather information regarding many variables which could have significant effects on outcomes. Such variables include the salient features of both classroom-lab and individualized programs: staffing patterns and staff-student ratios, materials and equipment, internal program structure and procedures, and student contact hours. Nor did the survey gather information regarding teacher and staff preparedness and specific techniques used in the classroom, lab, and/or individualized instructional area. Variables such as these may affect student outcomes as much or more than the features described. This study, however, did gather data regarding basic program configuration and general features and should therefore provide useful information to instructors interested in comparing and evaluating their own programs.

Study Sample and Participants

The reading curriculum survey was submitted to the 106 community colleges in California. Sixty-two surveys were returned. Not all colleges completed all items on the survey and not all colleges offered the same number of courses, so items addressed do not always include responses from sixty-two colleges.

Of the sixty-two respondents, twenty-three had participated in the LARC Student Outcomes Study in Reading which included twenty-eight community colleges. As reported in *LARC: Student Outcomes Study in Reading*, the 28 participating colleges are similar to all 106 colleges in terms of ethnic distribution and enrollment size. Since 23 of the 28 colleges in the outcomes study participated in this curriculum study and since 39 additional colleges across the state also participated, it can be stated with some assurance that the descriptive data reported herein are of value to all community colleges in California since they represent quite accurately the general features of reading programs on a statewide basis.

The colleges listed on page 6 participated in both the LARC Student Outcomes Study in Reading and in the Curriculum Study in Reading.

Design of the Study

The information attained from the surveys is based on Fall, 1987 community college reading programs. This self-reported information corresponds with the time period during which the LARC Student Outcomes Study in Reading was conducted.

The survey asked respondents to indicate the test(s) used for placement in reading courses/programs, the test(s) used to refine initial placement, and the test(s) used to place students in other courses. Then the survey asked respondents to indicate the reading courses offered in their colleges according to level and type of credit awarded:

1. reading course(s) offered to students at the college level for degree applicable and transferable credit

COLLEGES PARTICIPATING IN BOTH THE LARC STUDENT OUTCOMES STUDY IN READING AND IN THE CURRICULUM STUDY IN READING

College	Contact Person(s)
American River College	Robert Frew and Stephen Epler
Antelope Valley College	Anne Willikens and Karole Shappe
Butte College	Hannie Voyles and Barry Picciano
Cabrillo College	Rod Ouse
Cerritos College	George Melican and Bill Brodernick
College of the Desert	Douglas Garrison
College of the Redwoods	Bill Morris
Compton College	Patrick McLaughlin
Evergreen Valley College	Shirley Sloan and Jon Kangas
Fullerton College	Fran England
Gavilan College	John Hansell
Lake Tahoe Community College	Paula Sebastian
Lassen College	Tina Bishop
Merced College	Harlen Hamlin
Mount San Antonio College	Gil Domingues
Rancho Santiago College	Dennis Creedon
Sacramento City College	Linda Wark and Carol McKenzie
San Jose City College	Mary Jane Page and Carole Bogue
San Joaquin Delta College	Mary Ann Cox and Phillip Laughlin
Santa Barbara City College	Elaine Cohen
Santa Rosa Junior College	Douglas Fisher and Edmund Buckley
Solano College	Annette Runquist and Robin Arie-Donch
Southwestern College	Christina Chiriboga

2. reading course(s) offered near the college level (preparatory) for degree-applicable but non-transferable credit

3. reading course(s) offered at the developmental/remedial level (basic skills)

For each course offered at the developmental/remedial level, respondents were asked to indicate grade level parameters and to specify the type of credit granted or to indicate non-credit status. Respondents were then requested to supply for each course mentioned specific entry and exit criteria and the major skill areas and subskills treated. See Survey for Research in Assessment/Placement/Curriculum Practices in California Community College Reading Credit Classes, Appendix A.

The information which follows was drawn from the surveys and is descriptive in nature. Since this method of collecting data is often limited, many phone calls were placed to responding institutions during the Fall of 1988 in order to verify survey responses and to collect missing data. It was learned through this process that since Fall, 1987, some colleges have reconfigured some of their offerings. For example, at one college contacted, three distinct courses reported in the survey have since been collapsed into one course. Some changes have also been made regarding the kind of credit offered, specifically in the degree-applicable and non-degree applicable categories. Overall, however, it appears that the tests used, program configuration, entrance and exit criteria, and course content have remained generally consistent with Fall, 1987 practices.

Chapter II

FINDINGS REGARDING READING PROGRAMS

Reading Tests Used

Thirty-three tests are being used by the responding 62 colleges to place students into different levels of reading courses/programs. The three most commonly used tests for placement into most levels of reading courses are the Nelson-Denny, the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue), and the ASSET. An assessment instrument is used for placement in the reading courses in all 62 reporting colleges.

Twenty-eight tests are being used in 41 colleges to refine placement in reading following initial placement. The most commonly used tests to refine placement are the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue) and the Nelson-Denny. In 41 colleges 24 tests are used to place students in other courses. The three tests most often used are the Nelson-Denny, the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue), and the ASSET.

Courses Offered at Specified Levels

Colleges vary widely in terms of the reading offerings which they make available to students. Specifically, differences can be noted with regard to (1) the range of offerings, (2) course/program grade level parameters, and (3) the type of credit offered for courses at the same level. Some colleges, for example, offer a sequence of courses, classroom and/or individualized, spanning the entire range, 0 through college, with numerous courses available in the sequence; each course spans a narrow range of grade levels. An obvious attempt is made at these sites to attain homogeneous groups of reading level and needs. Other colleges offer a sequence of courses spanning the entire range, but they offer fewer courses in the sequence; each course, therefore, spans a wider range of grade levels with less apparent focus on homogeneity. Still other colleges offer a sequence of courses that does not span the 0 through college range. At these sites, usually a course(s) at the higher level and/or one or more courses at the lower level are omitted.

In a number of institutions, it is apparent that more than one course or program at the same

level may be offered providing students with greater flexibility and options for meeting their needs. Colleges also vary in the type of credit they offer students for reading courses at the same level.

College Level Coursework

Twenty-eight of the reporting colleges offer a course(s) in speed reading. At 24 colleges this coursework is transferable and degree-applicable, and at four of the colleges the coursework is degree applicable but non-transferable.

Twenty colleges offer a course in critical/analytical reading which is transferable and degree applicable at each site. (See Table 1.)

Table 1
College Level Reading Coursework

Coursework Type	Number of Colleges	Percent Responding	Transfer and Degree App.	Degree Applicable	Non-Degree Applicable
Speed Reading	28	45%	24	4	
Critical/ Analytical Skill Focus	20	32%	20		

Coursework At The 8-12th Grade Level

Fifty-four of the reporting colleges offer a course(s) at the 10-12th grade level range. At most of these colleges coursework at this level is degree applicable but non-transferable.

Sixty-one of the reporting colleges offer a course(s) at the 8-10th grade level range. Coursework at this level is often non-degree applicable.

Coursework At The 0-7th Grade Level

Fifty-two of the reporting colleges offer a course(s) at the 4-7th grade level range. Coursework at this level is generally non-degree applicable.

Forty-eight of the reporting colleges offer coursework at the 0-4th grade level range. At most of these colleges courses in this range are non-degree applicable. A few colleges offer courses at this level on a non-credit basis.

In the discussion above, the grade level parameters specified for courses offered are similar to but not exactly the same as the entry and exit levels reported for both classroom and individualized courses. For example, a course/program for which 9.5 through 12th grade level parameters were reported is included in the 10-12 category of coursework, and a course/program for which 7.5 through 9.9 grade level parameters were reported is placed in the 8-10 category of coursework.

Included in several categories are individualized programs spanning a wide grade level range. For example, an individualized program ranging from 0-10 is included in the 0-4, 4-7, and 8-10 categories. An individualized program ranging from 0-college is included in the 0-4, 4-7, 8-10, 10-12, and college level categories.

In addition, the following information regarding coursework was attained from the surveys and through follow-up phone calls:

1. Twenty-two of the respondents (35%) offer individualized reading programs spanning several grade levels. These programs may span various grade level ranges such as 0-7th grade level or 0 through college level. Reading instruction is offered in these programs in lieu of classroom offerings or in addition to some classroom offerings. Individualized offerings are included in the discussion and the table above.

2. Associated with many of the classroom courses are required/non-required labs which reinforce classroom instruction and provide opportunity for increased individualization of instruction. Some respondents reported lab information while others omitted it. Follow-up phone calls, however, affirmed that at many sites reading labs are in place to support classroom instruction. Lab offerings are not included in the discussion and the table above.

3. Some colleges offer reading instruction for which enrollment is limited to identified groups such as Learning Disabled (LD) students and English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Since these programs are not offered to the general student body, many colleges did not report them. Follow-up phone calls, however, verified that on many campuses such courses are made available to targeted groups. Courses/programs for these groups of students are not included in the discussion and the table above.

4. Many colleges offer, in addition to those offerings identified as reading courses/programs, special courses at various levels in vocabulary, study skills, and spelling. These courses are often integral to the program sequence recommended to reading students, and they are often taught by the reading instructors. They may or may not be recommended, however, to all reading students. Since, in general, they emphasize and/or further develop only specific aspects of reading curricula, they were not reported by many respondents. A few colleges reported their existence in marginal notations while others omitted them entirely. It can also be said that these courses are often, but not always, offered through the individualized instructional areas. These courses are not included in the discussion and the table above since complete information regarding them is not available. Reading courses which typically treat some of the subskills covered in these courses are, of course, included in the discussion and the table above.

Program Configuration

When the offerings in all of the responding colleges are analyzed for overall program configuration, three major patterns emerge.

I. MODEL I -- Individualized To Classroom Offerings

Colleges adopting this pattern offer individualized instruction in reading usually spanning the entire range, 0-college, and classroom or classroom-lab programs beginning at the 7th or 8th to 10th grade levels depending on the college. These colleges offer students who enter with low reading scores only individualized reading programs. (See Table 2.) As students demonstrate improved performance, they receive further reading instruction through the classroom-lab and/or the individualized area. Once students have reached designated grade levels, they may receive various recommendations depending on the blend of classroom and individualized offerings available on campus. For example, in some colleges, entering students enrolled in individualized programs may continue receiving individualized instruction in reading, and upon reaching a specific level, they may also enroll in a classroom offering addressing a related area such as vocabulary or study skills. In other institutions, students reaching a given reading level in an individualized reading program may then enroll in a classroom or classroom-lab reading course; at some sites they may also continue working in the individualized area for vocabulary, study skills or another program in essential skills.

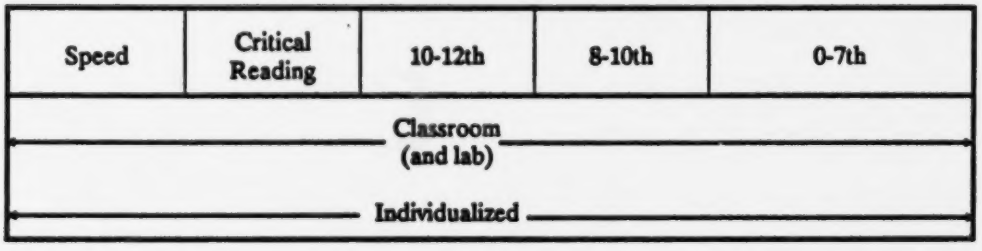
Table 2
Model I Configuration

Speed	Critical Reading	10-12th (or 8-12th)	0-10th (or 0-7th)
← Classroom (and Lab) →			
← Individualized →			

II. MODEL II – Classroom-lab And Individualized Instruction Spanning All Levels

Another pattern found in the colleges is that wherein both individualized and classroom or classroom-lab programs are offered across most of the entire range, 0 through college. (See Table 3.) The majority of reading students may be initially enrolled in classroom-lab sections. The individualized area, providing an alternate mode of reading instruction as well as programs in other essential skill areas, may serve reading students with special needs, scheduling problems, brief review needs and/or enrichment requests in areas such as critical/analytical reading or speed. In addition, the individualized area may provide some or all of the lab work directly associated with the reading classroom offerings in which students are enrolled. This area may also provide distinct programs in vocabulary, study skills, and spelling as well as programs in other skill areas such as writing, mathematics and problem solving/critical thinking.

Table 3
Model II Configuration



III. MODEL III – Classroom Or Classroom-lab Instruction Only

A third discernible pattern is that which consists of classroom or classroom-lab offerings only. In some institutions, the sequence of classroom offerings is implemented spanning the entire range, 0 through college, while at others the sequence extends across only part of that range. (See Table 4.) If the offerings

aren't available across the entire range, usually those at a low level (4th or 6th grade level and below) and/or those at the college level are omitted. With this pattern, individualized programs in reading are not offered although when labs are incorporated, much individualization may occur supporting classroom based instruction.

Table 4
Model III Configuration

Speed	Critical Reading	10-12th	8-10th	0-7th
← Classroom (and lab) →				

OR

Speed	Critical Reading	10-12th	8-10th	0-7th
		← Classroom (and lab) →		

Colleges using this model may offer courses with different grade level parameters than those shown. Given the first chart of Table 4, for example, a college may offer coursework spanning the range indicated but offer only three courses in the sequence: 0-9, 10-12, and a college level speed reading and/or analytical reading course. One site utilizing this model reported two courses with the following grade level parameters: 0-6 and 7-13. Given the second chart of Table 4, not spanning the entire range, courses with different parameters may be implemented as well. One site offering coursework at the lower end but not at the college level reported the following: 0-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12.

The three models are described by variations in modes of instruction, i.e., classroom and individualized instruction, and range of offerings, but colleges adopting a given model do

not implement them in exactly the same manner. It can be noted, however, that most colleges offer reading programs which correspond with one of the three models identified.

To obtain greater accuracy in terms of the frequency with which these models are implemented, a follow-up questionnaire was submitted to the 23 colleges which participated in both the LARC Student Outcomes Study and in this Curriculum Study in Reading. This questionnaire asked these colleges to verify the model ascribed to their programs. It was validated that at 35% of these colleges, the reading programs implemented correspond with Model I. At 22% of the colleges, reading programs correspond with Model II, and at 43% of the colleges, the reading programs in place correspond with Model III.

These 23 colleges were selected for further questioning and verification of model assigned since they were considered representative of all California community colleges. In the Outcomes Study, it was shown that the 28 participating colleges were similar in distribution to all 106 colleges. Even though only 23 of these colleges also participated in this Curriculum Study in Reading, the five colleges which didn't participate were fairly similar in distribution to all 106 colleges on important comparison variables. Removing an evenly distributed sub-sample of five colleges should leave a sample of 23 colleges similar in distribution to all 106 colleges. Consequently, one can conclude with some degree of certainty that the rate at which the models described herein are implemented in the 23 colleges can be attributed to all 106 colleges. Further substantiating this assumption is the fact that the other 39 colleges which participated in the Curriculum Study in Reading appear similar in distribution to all 106 colleges as well although data were not provided regarding important comparison variables.

It should be noted that based on this follow-up questionnaire, the percentage of colleges including individualized reading programs/courses within their range of offerings is higher than that reported in the original surveys which didn't specifically address mode of instruction. According to the surveys and phone calls discussed earlier, only 35 % of the colleges offer individualized reading programs/courses spanning various levels. According to the follow-up questionnaire, 57% of the 23 colleges offer individualized reading at some level(s).

Entrance Criteria and In-class Testing

Most of the California community colleges are now using assessment instruments for placement in reading courses. Many are also using additional tests to further refine initial placement. As instruction progresses, numerous college reading instructors are measuring competencies in various reading skills using material at the levels which correspond to given course grade level parameters.

The information which follows regarding entry criteria and in-class testing is provided in terms of the three percentile groups identified in the LARC Student Outcomes Study in Reading and generally incorporated in this curriculum study in reading: 76th-99th percentile rank (college level), 26th-75th percentile rank (8.7-12th grade level), and 0-25th percentile rank (0-8.7 grade level). Since the colleges have program configurations that vary by the range and number of offerings and mode of instruction or combination of modes, the data does not always include all sixty-two colleges for each percentile or course level grouping.

Courses at different colleges vary in their entry and exit levels. In this study, courses for students scoring in the three percentile groups indicated above are grouped as follows: college level courses are included in the 76th-99th percentile group; courses with entry and exit levels of 8-12 or 8-10 and 10-12 are included in the 26th-75th percentile group. Courses with 0-7 or 0-4 and 4-7 entry and exit levels are included in the 0-25th percentile group. The grade level parameters for the courses which are described are very close to but not exactly the same as the grade level parameters of the three percentile ranks. The course parameters used, however, more closely correspond with actual course parameters, and their close approximation with percentile rank parameters justifies their utilization. Survey responses indicate the following:

a. Courses for students in the 76th-99th percentile group (college) are generally offered to students scoring at/near college level.

b. Courses for students in the 26th-75th percentile group (8.7-12) are generally listed with 8-12 grade level parameters, or they are further divided into grade

level parameters such as 8-10 and 10-12. These courses are offered to most students reading in the 8th through 12th grade level range.

c. Courses for students in the 0-25th percentile group (0-8.7) are generally listed with 0-7 grade level parameters, or they are further divided into grade level parameters such as 0-4 and 4-7. These courses are offered to most students reading in the 0 through 7th grade level range.

Courses For Students In The 76th-99th Percentile Group (College)

For college level courses, usually speed reading and/or a course emphasizing critical/analytical skills applied to college level material, entrance criteria may be described as follows:

1. Twenty-eight colleges reported that they offer a course in speed reading and 20 reported another college level reading course offered which is both AA/AS Degree applicable and transferable. Various assessment instruments are used for placement in these courses. The Nelson-Denny, reported by six colleges, is most frequently used for this purpose.

2. Eighteen colleges reported that students are pretested in college level reading courses. The most frequently used pretest instrument reported by these colleges is the Nelson-Denny. It might be assumed that the scores on the placement instrument are also used as prescores in the course. The entrance cut-off score ranges from 10.0 to 12.0 in terms of grade level on the Nelson-Denny or other instrument used.

3. Sixteen colleges indicated that a posttest is administered in courses at this level. The Nelson-Denny administered in eight colleges for this purpose is most frequently used. The cut-off score most frequently used ranges from 11.0 to 13.0 in terms of grade level, but few colleges listed a specific raw/grade level/percentile score.

4. Sixteen colleges administering pretests and posttests use this information to measure skill growth; 11 of these colleges indicated that pre- and post-data are reported.

Courses For Students Scoring In The 26-75th Percentile Group (8-12)

For students reading in the 8-12th grade level range, two courses are often offered, one at the 8-10 range and another at the 10-12 range. Entrance criteria may be described as follows:

1. Fifty-four colleges reported that they offer a course at the 10-12th grade level range, and 61 reported a course offered at the 8-10th grade level range. Courses at the 10-12 range are usually AA/AS Degree applicable and non-transferable. Courses at the 8-10th grade level range often are non-degree applicable. Various assessment instruments used for placement in courses at these levels were reported by 34 colleges. Many different tests are used including the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue), the Nelson-Denny, and the Gates MacGinitie. No one test dominates.

2. Forty-two colleges reported that students are pretested in courses at the 8-12 range. The most frequently used pretest instruments are the Nelson-Denny and the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue) used by half the reporting colleges. It might be assumed that the scores on the placement instrument are used as prescores in the course. The entrance cut-off score ranges from 7.0 to 11.8 in terms of grade level on the Nelson-Denny, Stanford Diagnostic, or other instrument used for coursework at the 10-12th grade level and from 6.0 to 8.9 for coursework at the 8-10th grade level.

3. Thirty-nine colleges indicated that a posttest is administered in courses at this level. The Nelson-Denny administered in nine colleges for this purpose is most frequently used. The cut-off score most frequently used is 12.0 in terms of grade level for coursework at the 10-12th grade level and 8.9 or higher for coursework at the 8-10th grade level range. Not all colleges, however, listed a specific

raw/grade level/percentile score on a required posttest for courses at the 10-12th and 8-10th levels.

4. Thirty-one colleges administering pretests and posttests use this information to measure skill growth; 27 of these colleges indicated that pre- and post-data are reported.

Courses For Students Scoring In The 0-25th Percentile Group (0-7)

For students reading between the 0-7th grade level range, two courses are often offered, one at the 0-4 range and another at the 4-7 range. Entrance criteria may be described as follows:

1. Fifty-two colleges reported that they offer a course at the 4-7th grade level range and 48 reported a course offered at the 0-4th grade level range. Generally, courses at the 4-7 range are non-degree applicable. At most of the colleges, courses at the 0-4th grade level range are non-degree applicable as well; some colleges, however, offer coursework at this level on a non-credit basis. Various assessment instruments were reported by 33 colleges for placement in courses at these levels. The Nelson-Denny reported by nine colleges and the Stanford Diagnostic reported by six colleges are used for this purpose most frequently.

2. Thirty-five colleges reported that students are pretested in courses at the 0-7th grade level range. The most frequently used pretest instruments are the Nelson-Denny reported by five colleges and the Stanford Diagnostic reported by nine colleges. It might also be assumed that the scores on the placement instrument are used as prescores in the course. The entrance cut-off score typically ranges from 2.0 or 3.0 to 7.0 in terms of grade level on the Stanford Diagnostic or other instrument used for coursework at the 4-7th grade level. No clear pattern of entrance scores was indicated for coursework at the 0-4 range.

3. Thirty-two colleges indicated that a posttest is administered in courses at this level. The Stanford Diagnostic administered in seven colleges for this purpose is most frequently used. The Nelson-Denny is used at five colleges. The cut-off score most frequently used ranges from 6.9 to 8.0 in terms of grade level for coursework at the 4-7th grade level and from 3.0 to 5.0 for coursework at the 0-4th grade level range. Not all colleges, however, listed a specific raw/grade level/percentile score on a required posttest for courses at the 4-7th and 0-4th levels.

4. Thirty colleges administering pretests and posttests use this information to measure skill growth; 22 of these colleges indicated that pre- and post-data are reported.

Exit Standards

Not only are reading instructors in the California community colleges aware of the value of assessing students for appropriate placement in reading courses/programs, but in increasing numbers they are measuring growth and, in conjunction with departmental agreement, setting exit standards for their courses. At many sites, exit standards comprised several indices including grade level on a standardized test, completion of assignments, and progress in rate and comprehension. In some colleges, instructor judgment is permitted in addition to exit criteria established when exceptions warrant it.

The information which follows regarding exit criteria is provided in terms of the three percentile ranks identified in the LARC Student Outcomes Study in Reading and used in this curriculum study. Again, since college program configuration varies in the range of offerings and number of courses offered as well as mode of instruction, the data reported do not always include all sixty-two respondents. Course parameters listed, as explained in the entrance criteria section, are similar to but not identical to percentile rank parameters.

Courses For Students Scoring In The 76-99th Percentile Group (College)

For college level reading courses, AA/AS Degree applicable and transferable, the following data were collected regarding exit criteria:

1. Seventeen colleges reported that the individual instructor determines the exit standards; eight colleges reported that the department determines the standards; and one college reported "other."

2. Exit standards specified include completion of assignments and labs, improvement in reading rate and comprehension, and a passing grade of C or better for the course, and, in a few cases, college level reading as indicated by a standardized test.

3. Of those 10 colleges using a common exit test, three reported that students must pass the test in order to proceed to the next reading course. One college indicated that the exit test is the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level. Five colleges indicated that exceptions may be made based on instructor judgment. The passing grade most frequently required on the test as reported by three colleges is a D, and the percentage most frequently required reported by two colleges is 70%. The grade in the course most frequently required to proceed to the next course in the sequence reported by six colleges is a C. It might be assumed here that the next course in the sequence is English 1A or a combination reading-composition course required for graduation.

4. The range of percentages of the total grade for each criterion used for courses at this level as reported by 17 colleges can be noted as follows:

10-80%	department exit test with no clear mode
10-66%	in-class written essays and assignments with 30% as the mode
5-70%	in-class objective quizzes and exams with 35% as the mode
5-50%	in-class participation with 20% as the mode
15-60%	other, including lab assignments with 25% as the mode

5. Fourteen colleges reported that the exit standard is uniform for all college level courses offered in the day; 14 colleges reported a common exit standard for college level courses offered in the evening; 12 colleges reported a uniform standard for all college level courses offered on campus; eight colleges reported a common exit standard for all college level courses offered off campus.

6. The reading requirement for the AA/AS Degree is met in nine of the colleges by course completion only, in three of the colleges by proficiency exam only, in four colleges by course completion *and* proficiency exam, and in six colleges by course completion *or* proficiency exam. The reading course most frequently required for the AA/AS Degree is a combination reading-composition course, which may or may not be the standard freshman composition course. The proficiency exam most frequently used is the Nelson-Denny. If passing a standardized reading instrument is required for the AA/AS degree, then the most frequently designated score is 13.0 in terms of grade level.

Courses For Students Scoring In The 26-75th Percentile Group (8-12)

For courses offered to students reading between the 8th and 12th grade levels, often separated into two courses, one at the 8-10 range and another at the 10-12 range, the following data were collected regarding exit criteria. For courses at the 10-12 range, the following was reported:

1. Twenty-one colleges reported that the individual instructor determines the exit standards; 20 colleges reported that the department determines the standards; and seven colleges reported "other."

2. Exit standards specified include 10.9 to 12.0 grade level on a standardized test, completion of course requirements, and a grade of C or better in the course.

3. Of the 26 colleges using a common exit test, 18 reported that students must pass the test in order to proceed to the next reading course. Five colleges indicated

that the exit test is the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level. Eighteen colleges indicated that exceptions may be made based on instructor judgment. The passing grade most frequently required on the test as reported by 10 colleges is a C, and the percentage most frequently required reported by 11 colleges is 80%. The grade in the course most frequently required to proceed to the next course in the sequence reported by 16 colleges is C.

4. The average percentage of the total grade for each criterion used for courses at this level as reported by 38 colleges are as follows:

20-75%	department exit test with 50% as the mode
25-50%	in-class written essays and assignments with 35% as the mode
25-50%	in-class objective quizzes and exams with 40% as the mode
10-25%	in-class participation with 15% as the mode
15-50%	other with 25% as the mode

5. Nineteen colleges reported that the exit standard is uniform for all 10-12th grade level courses offered in the day; 15 colleges reported a common exit standard for 10-12th grade level courses offered in the evening; 16 colleges reported a uniform standard for all 10-12th grade level courses offered on campus; 11 colleges reported a common exit standard for all 10-12th grade level courses offered off campus.

For courses at the 8-10 range, the findings are as follows:

1. Twenty-one colleges reported that the individual instructor determines the exit standards; 26 colleges reported that the department determines the standards; and seven colleges reported "other."

2. Exit standards specified include 8.9 or higher grade level on a standardized test, satisfactory completion of coursework, and a C or better course grade.

3. Of the 36 colleges using a common exit test, 24 reported that students must pass

the test in order to proceed to the next reading course. Seven colleges indicated that the exit test is the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level. Twenty-seven colleges indicated that exceptions may be made based on instructor judgment. The passing grade most frequently required on the test as reported by seven colleges is a C, and the percentage most frequently required reported by nine colleges is 70%. The grade in the course most frequently required to proceed to the next course in the sequence reported by 22 colleges is C.

4. The range of percentages of the total grade for each criterion used for courses at this level as reported by 34 colleges are as follows:

10-100%	department exit test with 30% as the mode
10-90%	in-class written essays and assignments with 25% as the mode
15-100%	in-class objective quizzes and exams with 30% as the mode
10-40%	in-class participation with 15% as the mode
10-60%	other with 20% as the mode

5. Nineteen colleges reported that the exit standard is uniform for all 8-10th grade level courses offered in the day; 16 colleges reported a common exit standard for 8-10th grade level courses offered in the evening; 17 colleges reported a uniform standard for all 8-10th grade level courses offered on campus; 12 colleges reported a common exit standard for all 8-10th grade level courses offered off campus.

Courses For Students Scoring In The 0-25th Percentile Group (0-7)

For courses offered to students reading between the 0-7th grade level range, often separated into two courses, one at the 0-4 range and another at the 4-7 range, the following data were collected regarding exit criteria. For courses at the 4-7 range, the findings are as follows:

1. Eighteen colleges reported that the individual instructor determines the exit

standards; 20 colleges reported that the department determines the standards; and five colleges reported "other."

2. Exit standards specified include a grade level on a standardized test, usually around 6.9 to 8.0, a passing average on class tests, completion of course assignments, and attaining a reading level at least one grade level above entry level.

3. Of the 28 colleges using a common exit test, 18 reported that students must pass the test in order to proceed to the next reading course. Eight colleges indicated that the exit test is the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level. Twenty colleges indicated that exceptions may be made based on instructor judgment. The passing grade most frequently required on the test as reported by seven colleges is C, and the percentage most frequently required reported by nine colleges is 80%. The grade in the course most frequently required to proceed to the next course in the sequence reported by 16 colleges is C.

4. The range of percentages of the total grade for each criterion used for courses at this level as reported by 28 colleges are as follows:

5-100%	department exit test with 30% as the mode
20-50%	in-class written essays and assignments with 30% as the mode
25-90%	in-class objective quizzes and exams with 35% as the mode
10-50%	in-class participation with 20% as the mode
20-60%	other with 25% as the mode

5. Nineteen colleges reported that the exit standard is uniform for all 4-7th grade level courses offered in the day; 13 colleges reported a common exit standard for 4-7th grade level courses offered in the evening; 16 colleges reported a uniform standard for all 4-7th grade level courses offered on campus; nine colleges reported a common exit standard for all 4-7th grade level courses offered off campus.

For courses at the 0-4 range, the following was reported:

1. Four colleges reported that the individual instructor determines the exit standards; eight colleges reported that the department determines the standards; and three colleges reported "other."

2. Exit standards specified include a grade level on a standardized test, usually around 3.0 to 5.0, an increase of at least two grade levels, completion of a course contract, and a grade of C or better in the course.

3. Of the 12 colleges using a common exit test, seven reported that students must pass the test in order to proceed to the next reading course. Four colleges indicated that the exit test is the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level. Seven colleges indicated that exceptions may be made based on instructor judgment. The passing grade most frequently required on the test as reported by four colleges is C, and the percentage most frequently required reported by one college is 80%. The grade in the course most frequently required to proceed to the next course in the sequence reported by six colleges is C.

4. The average percentage of the total grade for each criterion used for courses at this level as reported by 11 colleges are as follows:

0-100%	department exit test with 45% as the mode
20-45%	in-class written essays and assignments with 30% as the mode
20-100%	in-class objective quizzes and exams with 35%as the mode
25-100%	in-class participation
33-100%	other

5. Twelve colleges reported that the exit standard is uniform for all 0-4th grade level courses offered in the day; 10 colleges reported a common exit standard for 0-4th grade level courses offered in the evening; 10 colleges reported a uniform standard for all 0-4th grade level courses offered on campus; three colleges reported a common exit standard for all 0-4th grade level courses offered off campus.

Chapter III

FINDINGS REGARDING READING COURSE CONTENT

Purpose and Limitations of the Survey In Terms of Content Description

The last two pages of the study's survey contained a comprehensive list of major skill areas and related subskills addressed as course objectives. (See Appendix A) For courses at the various levels, respondents were asked to identify major objectives or skills defined as those which require at least two lecture hours for presentation and practice. Again, responses were based on the Fall, 1987 reading curriculum, and this descriptive information is self-reported.

In a survey of this kind, certain limitations must be noted. Terminology used in a comprehensive list of reading skill areas or objectives may not have the same meaning for all instructors in terms of skill treatment. In addition, it is not clear when using a simple check-off system whether some of the skills treated receive more or less emphasis than others identified in the list at any given level. Furthermore, information of this kind was usually reported by one person from a "department perspective," yet it is known that some instructors following the same course outline may place greater emphasis on some skill areas and/or treat a slightly different set of subskills than other instructors in the same department. Survey responses, therefore, may reflect the respondent's point of view. Despite these limitations, a sense of course content for the courses at the levels specified can be attained when reviewing the data supplied by reporting colleges.

Major Focus: College Level Courses

For college level reading courses, the most frequently treated skill areas, or those receiving major focus, are defined as those emphasized by a majority (55%) of the colleges reporting

skills for this level. Those skill areas receiving major focus are, in rank order: (See also Figure 1.)

1. Critical Thinking (evaluative, conceptual relationships, empirical verification)
2. Comprehension (main ideas, levels of understanding and questioning, methods of support, predicting outcomes, categorization, paragraph structure, similarities and differences)
3. Fluency (skimming, scanning, adjusted rate)
4. Figurative Language
5. Study Skill (SQ3R or DRTA)

Other skills are emphasized in coursework at this level in less than 55% of the colleges offering such coursework.

It must be noted that the section in the survey addressing course content included only one column for college level reading courses. The data reported for speed reading and critical/analytical reading courses were collapsed in one column reserved for college level coursework. In reality, however, the focus of these two kinds of courses is different. Speed reading courses have as an ultimate goal increased fluency while an adequate level of comprehension is maintained or increased as material increases in difficulty. In the process of leading students to reach this goal, instructors may emphasize fluency and some aspects of comprehension, vocabulary development, and critical thinking.

In critical/analytical reading courses, the ultimate objective is to increase students' ability to critically analyze and evaluate material at a high difficulty level. In the process of leading students to reach this goal, instructors may focus on critical thinking, figurative language, comprehension and study skills. Fluency may or may not receive great emphasis.

Because the focus differs for these two kinds of courses, the rank order of skill areas receiving emphasis in these courses is different. The data obtained from the survey's college level reading course column, however, do not distinguish between the ultimate goals and rank order of skill areas emphasized in these two kinds of courses. Collecting such data would have required two separate columns in the survey, one for reporting skills

Figure 1
Number of Colleges Emphasizing Skill Areas for College Level Courses

emphasized in speed reading, another for reporting skills receiving major focus in critical/analytical reading courses. One can though, upon review of the data, gain a sense of the skill areas receiving major focus in college level reading courses.

It may also be useful to look at the data in another way. In order to determine the skill areas and their related subskills which receive major focus, it is possible first to rank order the skill areas treated in courses at this level. Then it is helpful to rank order related subskills under each major skill area identified. (See Table 5.)

Major Focus: Courses at the 10-12th Range

The most frequently treated skill areas or those receiving major emphasis are summarized in rank order of frequency reported. Skills or objectives receiving major focus are defined as those treated in reading coursework at the 10-12th grade level offered by 55% of the colleges reporting skills for courses at this level. (See Figure 2) They are as follows:

1. Comprehension (main idea, paragraph structure, methods of support, differences, predicting outcomes, sequencing, categorization, levels of understanding and questioning)
2. Study Skills (SQ3R or DRTA, outlining, test taking, notetaking)
3. Vocabulary (in context, multiple meanings, affixes, roots)
4. Fluency (skimming, scanning, adjusted rate)
5. Critical Thinking (evaluative, empirical verification, conceptual relationships)
6. Figurative Language

Additional skills receiving emphasis were reported for courses at this level by less than 55% of the colleges offering such coursework. (See Figure 2.)

To look at the data in another way, the skill areas receiving emphasis can be placed in rank order, and the subskills for each area can also be listed in rank order under them. (See Table 6.)

Table 5
Rank Order of Skill and Subskill Areas: College Level Courses

Skill Area	Number of Colleges
Critical Thinking	
Evaluative	
Conceptual Relationships	32
Empirical Verification	29
Fluency	
Skimming	27
Scanning	27
Adjusted Rate	26
Eye Patterns	20
Comprehension	
Levels of Understanding and Questioning	27
Main Idea	26
Methods of Support	24
Predicting Outcomes	23
Categorization	23
Paragraph Structure	23
Similarities	22
Differences	22
Figurative Language	26
Study Skills	
SQ3R or DRTA	23
Notetaking	17
Outlining	17
Test Taking Techniques	16
Vocabulary	
In Context	20
Affixes	16
Roots	16
Synonyms	8
Homonyms	5
Compound Words	2
Phonics	
Word Attack Skills	1

Figure 2
Number of Colleges Emphasizing Skill Areas for 10-12th Level Courses

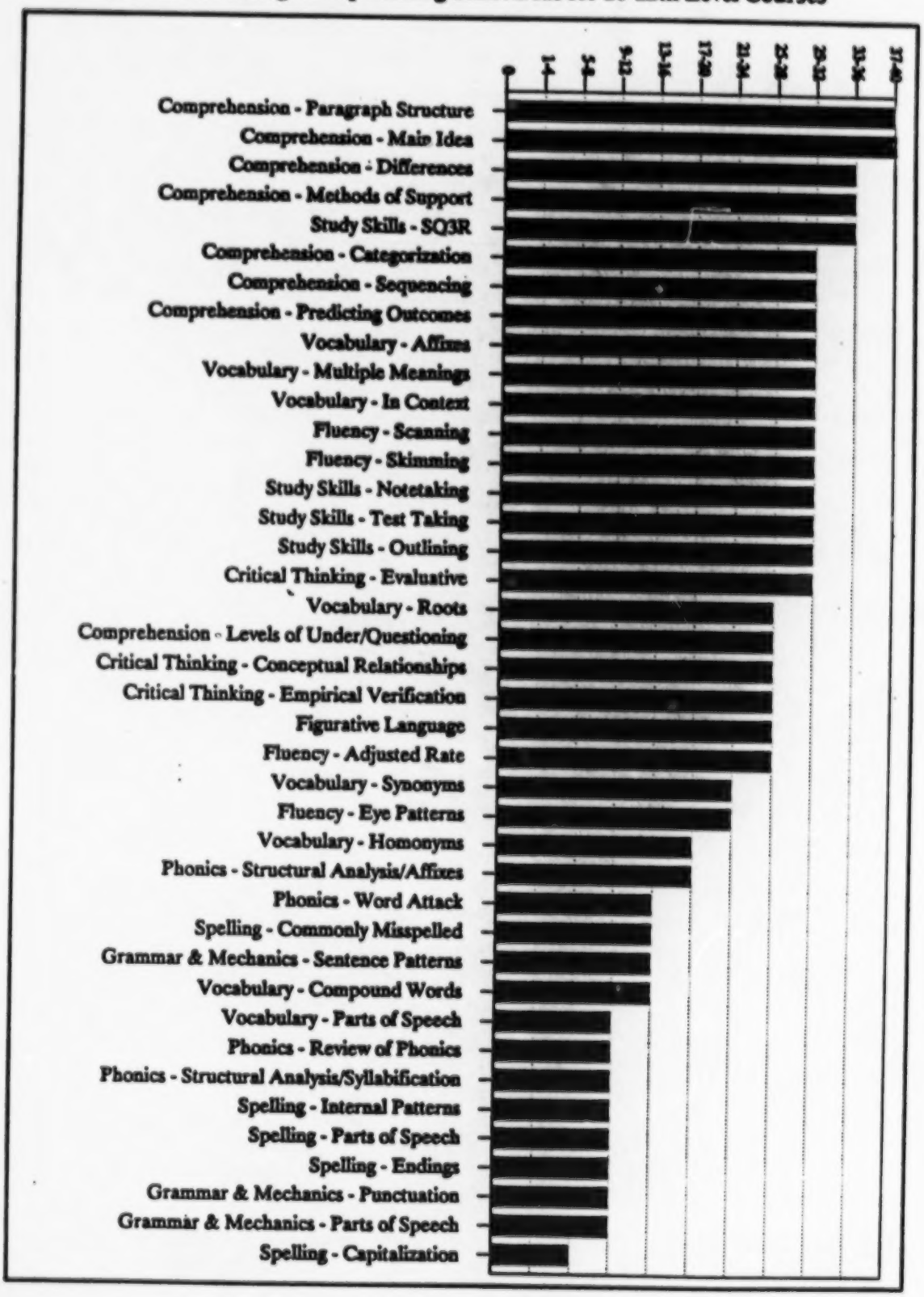


Table 6
Rank Order of Skill and Subskill Areas: Courses at the 10-12th Range

Skill Area	Number of Colleges
Comprehension	
Main Idea	37
Paragraph Structure	37
Methods of Support	35
Differences	33
Predicting Outcomes	32
Sequencing	32
Categorization	31
Levels of Understanding & Questioning	27
Study Skills	
SQ3R	35
Outlining	32
Test Taking	30
Notetaking	29
Vocabulary	
In Context	32
Multiple Meanings	29
Affixes	29
Roots	28
Synonyms	23
Homonyms	18
Compound Words	14
Parts of Speech	12
Fluency	
Skimming	32
Scanning	30
Adjusted Rate	26
Eye Patterns	22
Critical Thinking	
Evaluative	30
Empirical Verification	27
Conceptual Relationships	27
Figurative Language	26
Phonics	
Structural Analysis--Affixes	17
Word Attack Skills	16
Structural Analysis--Syllabification	12
Review of Phonics	9
Spelling	
Commonly Misspelled	16
Endings	12
Parts of Speech	12
Internal Patterns	10
Capitalization	7
Grammar & Mechanics	
Sentence Patterns	16
Parts of Speech	11
Punctuation	11

Table 6 clarifies the emphasis placed on both major skill areas and related subskills in courses at the 10-12th grade level. This illustration may help instructors compare the skills they emphasize in reading courses at this level with those emphasized by others teaching courses at the same level.

Major Focus: Courses at the 8-10th Range

The skills most frequently treated or those receiving major focus can be placed in rank order by frequency reported. Skills or objectives receiving major focus are defined as those treated in coursework at the 8-10th grade reading level offered by 55% of the colleges reporting skills for courses at this level. (See Figure 3.) They are as follows:

1. Vocabulary (in context, multiple meanings, affixes, roots)
2. Comprehension (main idea, paragraph structure, similarities, categorization, methods of support, differences, sequencing, levels of understanding and questioning)
3. Study Skill (SQ3R or DRTA)

Additional skills receiving emphasis were reported for courses at this level by less than 55% of the colleges offering such coursework. (See Figure 3.)

To look at the data in another way, the skill areas receiving emphasis can be placed in rank order, and their related subskills can also be placed in rank order under them. (See Table 7.)

Table 7 clarifies the emphasis placed on both major skill areas and related subskills in courses at the 8-10th grade level. Reviewing this table may help instructors compare the skills they emphasize with those emphasized by others teaching courses at the same level.

Figure 3
Number of Colleges Emphasizing Skill Areas for 8-10th Level Courses

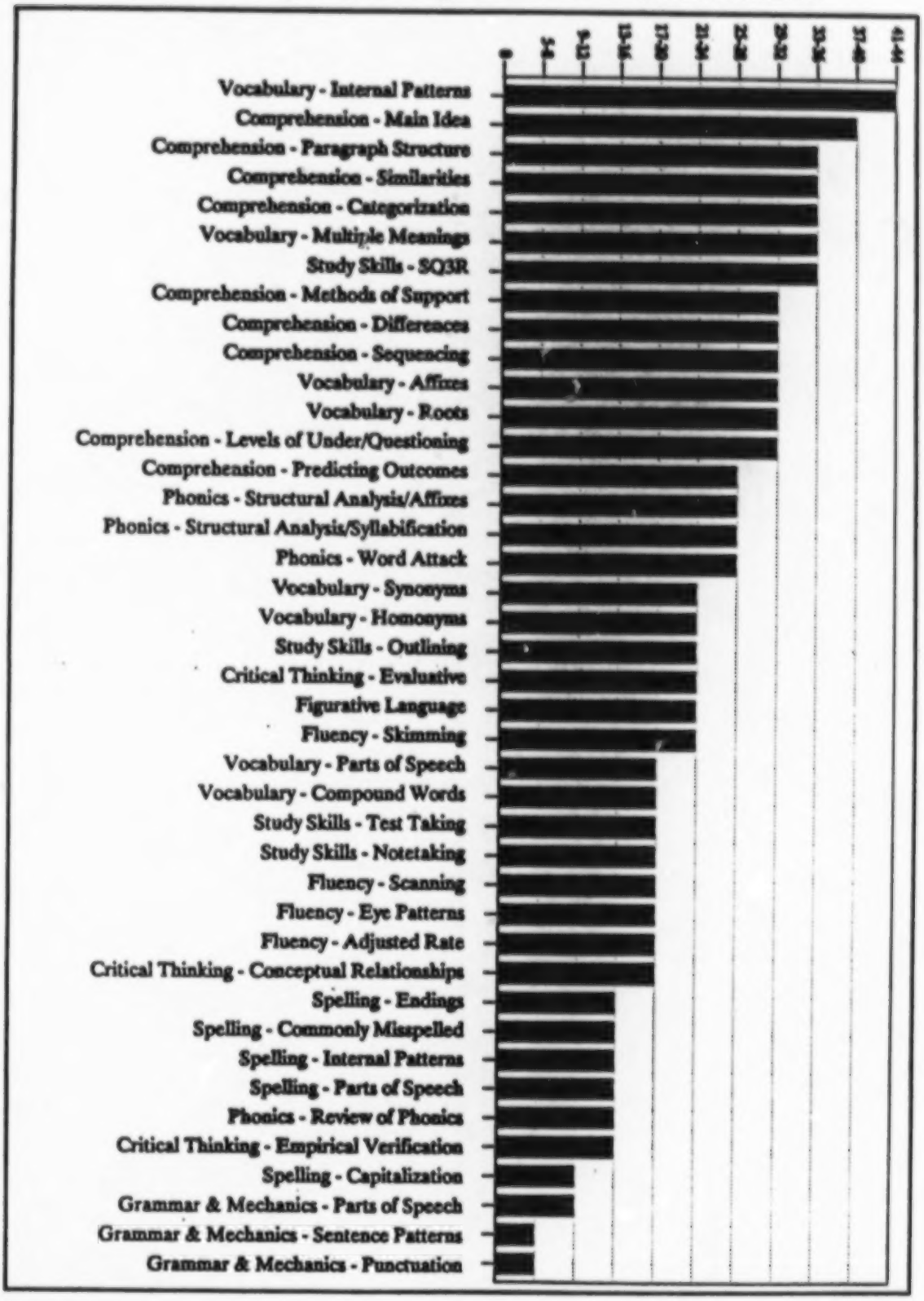

Vocabulary - Internal Patterns
Comprehension - Main Idea
Comprehension - Paragraph Structure
Comprehension - Similarities
Comprehension - Categorization
Vocabulary - Multiple Meanings
Study Skills - SQ3R
Comprehension - Methods of Support
Comprehension - Differences
Comprehension - Sequencing
Vocabulary - Affixes
Vocabulary - Roots
Comprehension - Levels of Under/Questioning
Comprehension - Predicting Outcomes
Phonics - Structural Analysis/Affixes
Phonics - Structural Analysis/Syllabification
Phonics - Word Attack
Vocabulary - Synonyms
Vocabulary - Homonyms
Study Skills - Outlining
Critical Thinking - Evaluative
Figurative Language
Fluency - Skimming
Vocabulary - Parts of Speech
Vocabulary - Compound Words
Study Skills - Test Taking
Study Skills - Notetaking
Fluency - Scanning
Fluency - Eye Patterns
Fluency - Adjusted Rate
Critical Thinking - Conceptual Relationships
Spelling - Endings
Spelling - Commonly Misspelled
Spelling - Internal Patterns
Spelling - Parts of Speech
Phonics - Review of Phonics
Critical Thinking - Empirical Verification
Spelling - Capitalization
Grammar & Mechanics - Parts of Speech
Grammar & Mechanics - Sentence Patterns
Grammar & Mechanics - Punctuation

Table 7
Rank Order of Skill and Subskill Areas: Courses at the 8-10th Range

Skill Area	Number of Colleges
Vocabulary	
In Context	41
Multiple Meanings	34
Affixes	32
Roots	31
Synonyms	24
Homonyms	21
Parts of Speech	20
Compound Words	19
Comprehension	
Main Idea	38
Paragraph Structure	35
Similarities	33
Categorization	33
Methods of Support	32
Differences	32
Sequencing	32
Levels of Understanding & Questioning	29
Predicting Outcomes	27
Study Skills	
SQ3R or DRTA	33
Outlining	22
Test Taking	19
Notetaking	18
Phonics	
Structural Analysis--Affixes	27
Structural Analysis--Syllabification	24
Word Attack Skills	24
Review of Phonics	14
Figurative Language	24
Critical Thinking	
Evaluative	21
Conceptual Relationships	17
Empirical Verification	16
Fluency	
Skimming	21
Scanning	20
Eye Patterns	19
Adjusted Rate	17
Spelling	
Endings	16
Commonly Misspelled	15
Internal Patterns	13
Parts of Speech	13
Capitalization	11
Grammar & Mechanics	
Parts of Speech	9
Sentence Patterns	7
Punctuation	5

Major Focus: Courses at the 4-7th Range

The skills treated most frequently or those receiving major emphasis in courses at the 4-7th grade level range can be placed in rank order by frequency of colleges reporting the emphasis. Skills receiving major focus are defined as those treated in coursework at the 4-7th grade reading level offered by 55% of the colleges reporting skills for courses at this level. (See Figure 4.) They are as follows:

1. Vocabulary (in context, multiple meanings, synonyms, affixes, homonyms, roots)
2. Comprehension (main idea)
3. Phonics (word attack, structural analysis)

Additional skills receiving emphasis were reported for courses at this level by less than 55% of the colleges offering such coursework. (See Figure 4.)

The data may be viewed in another way. The skill areas receiving emphasis can be placed in rank order, and their related subskills can also be placed in rank order under them. (See Table 8).

Table 8 clarifies the emphasis placed on both major skill areas and their related subskills in courses at the 4-7th grade level in reading. Upon its review instructors may compare the emphasis they place on certain skills in courses at this level with that placed by others teaching similar courses.

Figure 4
Number of Colleges Emphasizing Skill Areas for 4-7th Level Courses

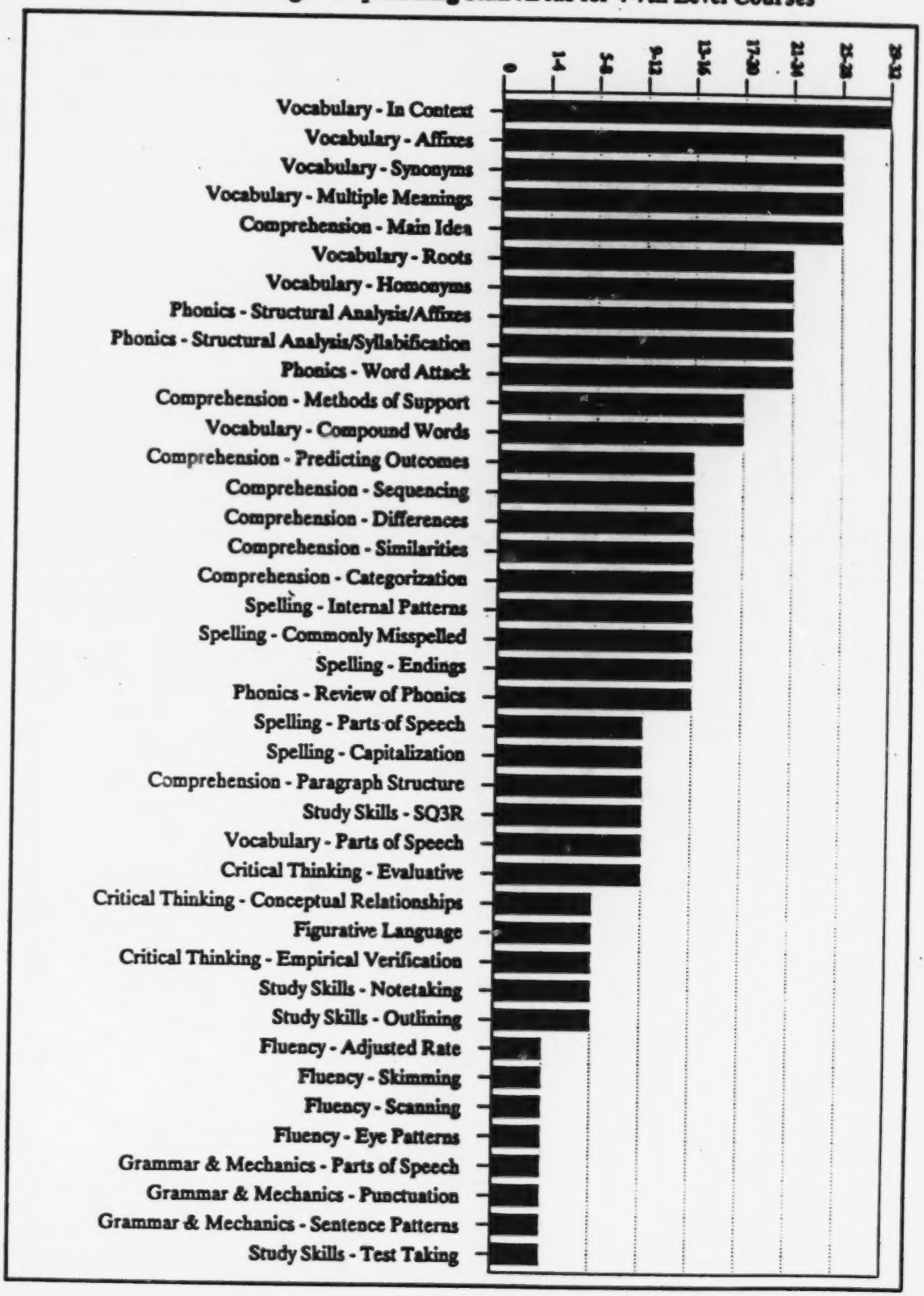


Table 8
Rank Order of Skill and Subskill Areas: Courses at the 4-7th Range

Skill Area	Number of Colleges
Vocabulary	
In Context	31
Multiple Meanings	26
Synonyms	26
Affixes	25
Homonyms	23
Roots	23
Compound Words	19
Parts of Speech	11
Comprehension	
Main Idea	25
Methods of Support	18
Categorization	15
Similarities	14
Differences	14
Sequencing	14
Predicting Outcomes	13
Paragraph Structure	11
Phonics	
Word Attack	22
Structural Analysis--Syllabification	21
Structural Analysis--Affixes	21
Review	15
Spelling	
Endings	15
Commonly Misspelled	15
Internal Patterns	13
Capitalization	11
Parts of Speech	10
Study Skills	
SQ3R or DRTA	11
Outlining	6
Notetaking	5
Test Taking	3
Critical Thinking	
Evaluative	10
Conceptual Relationships	8
Empirical Verification	7
Figurative Language	8
Fluency	
Eye Patterns	4
Scanning	3
Skimming	2
Adjusted Rate	2
Grammar & Mechanics	
Sentence Patterns	4
Punctuation	4
Parts of Speech	3

Major Focus: Courses at the 0-4th Range

The skills treated most frequently or those receiving major emphasis in courses at the 0-4th grade level can be placed in rank order by frequency reported. Skills receiving major focus are defined as those treated in coursework at the 0-4th grade level offered in 55% of the colleges reporting skills for courses at this level. (See Figure 5.) They are as follows:

1. Phonics (structural analysis and word attack)
2. Vocabulary (in context, compound words, homonyms, synonyms, multiple meanings, affixes)
3. Spelling (endings)

Additional skills receiving emphasis were reported for courses at this level by less than 55% of the colleges offering such coursework. (See Figure 5.)

To look at the data in another way, the skill areas receiving emphasis can be placed in rank order, and their related subskills can also be placed in rank order under them. (See Table 9.)

Table 9 illustrates the emphasis placed on both major skill areas and related subskills in courses at the 0-4th grade level. Reviewing this table, instructors may compare the skills they emphasize with those emphasized by others teaching courses at the same level.

Comparison of Course Content

As might be expected, the major skill areas treated in reading courses at different levels tend to vary with the level of coursework offered. In general, course content varies as follows:

1. Figurative language and/or vocabulary development receives major emphasis in reading courses at all levels, 0-college.

Figure 5
Number of Colleges Emphasizing Skill Areas for 0-4th Level Courses

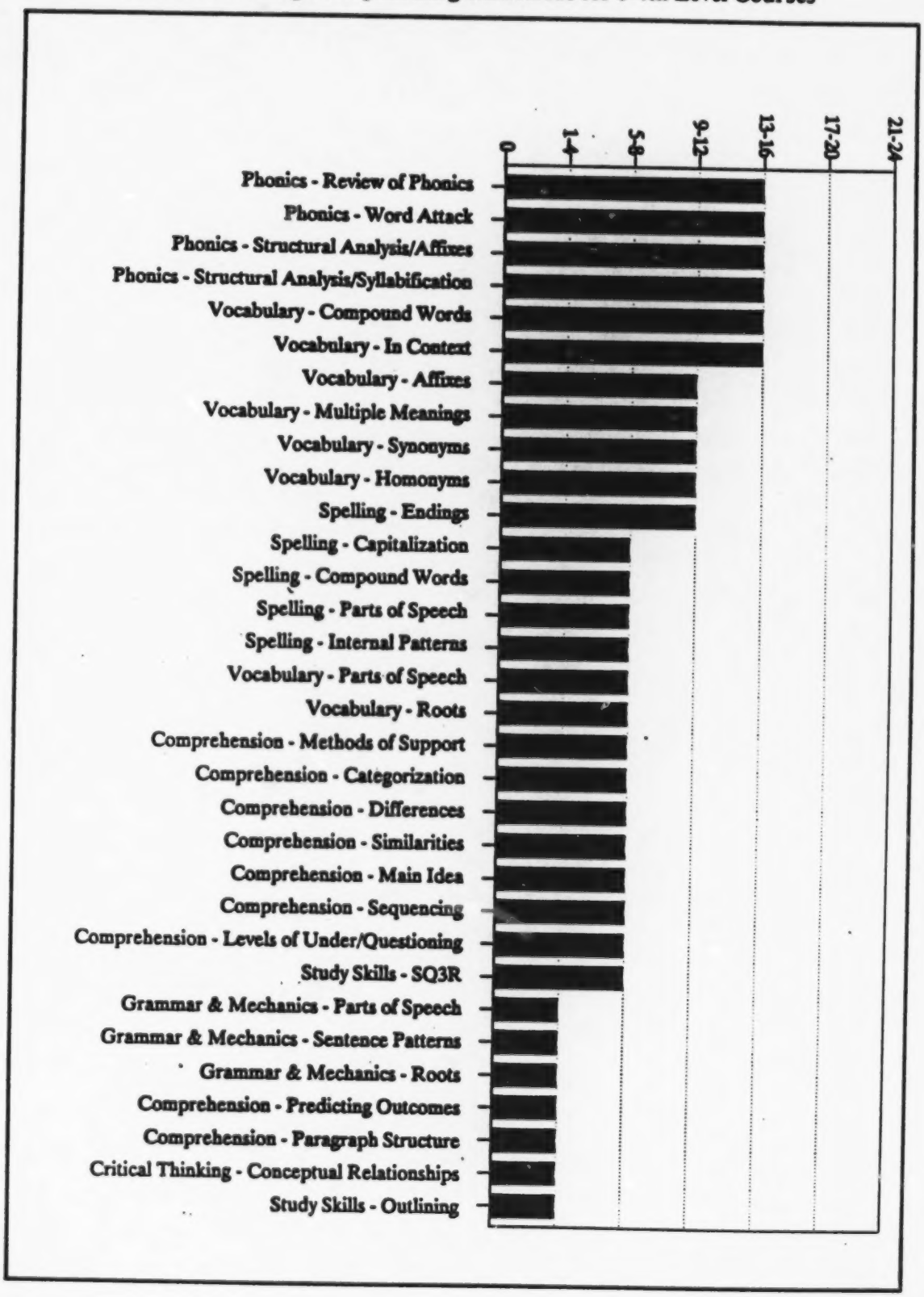


Table 9
Rank Order of Skill and Subskill Areas: Courses at the 0-4th Range

Skill Area	Number of Colleges
Phonics	
Structural Analysis--Syllabification	16
Word Attack	15
Review	14
Structural Analysis--Affixes	13
Vocabulary	
In Context	15
Compound Words	13
Homonyms	12
Synonyms	12
Multiple Meanings	11
Affixes	9
Roots	8
Parts of Speech	8
Spelling	
Endings	9
Internal Patterns	8
Parts of Speech	7
Commonly Misspelled	7
Capitalization	7
Comprehension	
Levels of Understanding & Questioning	7
Sequencing	7
Main Idea	7
Similarities	6
Differences	6
Categorization	5
Methods of Support	5
Paragraph Structure	3
Predicting Outcomes	2
Study Skills	
SQ3R or DRTA	6
Outlining	2
Grammar and Mechanics	
Sentence Patterns	4
Punctuation	3
Parts of Speech	2
Critical Thinking	
Conceptual Relationships	2

2. Some aspects of comprehension receive major emphasis in reading coursework at the 4-college range.
3. Some aspect(s) of study skills receives major emphasis in reading courses at the 8-college range.
4. In reading courses at the college level and at the 10-12th grade level, the same general set of skill areas is emphasized although the rank order of the skill areas shifts with critical thinking of highest priority in college level courses and of lower priority than some other major skill areas in 10-12th grade level courses.
5. Critical thinking, fluency, and some aspects of study skills receive major emphasis in reading courses at the 10-college range, while at the 0-10 range, these skill areas are not emphasized, except the study skill SQ3R at the 8-10 range.
6. Some aspects of phonics are emphasized in courses at the 0-7 range while phonics is not a major area of emphasis in the 8-college range.
7. Only in the coursework at the 0-4 level is spelling emphasized.
8. Grammar and mechanics are not emphasized in reading courses at any level.
9. Coursework at the college level and at the lower levels, particularly at the 0-4th grade level, focuses on fewer subskills than coursework in the 8-12 range. The emphasis at the college level is on higher level critical thinking, comprehension skills, and fluency while the emphasis at the lowest level is on phonics, vocabulary development and spelling subskills. Courses at the 8-12 range address nearly all subskills listed in the survey although major emphasis is not placed in some areas such as phonics, spelling, and grammar.

Table 10 summarizes the skill areas emphasized at the various levels by a majority of the respondents at a given level.

The final course content question asked in the survey was: "What percentage of this course is devoted to teaching writing skills?" Responses varied by institution and grade level of coursework offered. Most respondents reported that 15% or less of their reading courses were devoted to teaching writing skills. Also, it must be noted that in the survey's checklist of major skill areas and subskills, a very small percentage of respondents checked the category labeled "Grammar and Mechanics." Those who do incorporate writing instruction

in reading courses then may address aspects of writing other than or in addition to grammar and mechanics.

Table 10
Major Areas of Emphasis by Level & Rank Order

Rank	College Level	10-12th Level	8-10th Level	4-7th Level	0-4th Level
1.	Critical Thinking (major aspects)	Comprehension (major aspects)	Vocabulary (major aspects)	Vocabulary (major aspects)	Phonics (word attack and structural analysis
2.	Comprehension (major aspects)	Study Skills (major aspects)	Comprehension (major aspects)	Comprehension (main idea)	Vocabulary (major aspects)
3.	Fluency (major aspects)	Vocabulary (major aspects)	Study Skills (SQ3R)	Phonics (word attack and structural analysis	Spelling (endings)
4.	Figurative Language	Fluency (major aspects)			
5.	Study Skill (SQ3R)	Critical Thinking (major aspects)			
6.	Figurative Language				

It must also be noted, that some of the colleges may have reported percentages with respect to reading-writing combination courses. In the section of the survey asking respondents to list course titles and entrance and exit criteria, writing as an equal component was checked for four transferable, degree-applicable credit courses, nine courses at the 8-12 range, and five courses at the 0-7 range. Some of the course titles reported suggest reading-writing combination courses.

In general, however, responses to this item defy clear analysis. Some respondents may have reported percentages of time devoted to writing instruction to indicate an amount of writing activity involved in the courses rather than to indicate the percentage of courses devoted to teaching writing skills per se. Marginal notations made by a few respondents indicated this intent. Follow-up phone calls made to some institutions verified this speculation as well. All respondents, however, were not contacted regarding this item.

Chapter IV

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FURTHER QUESTIONS

The Curriculum Study in Reading has addressed reading tests used, range of offerings, course/program grade level parameters, course entrance and exit criteria, type of credit offered and the most typical reading program configurations or "models" implemented in the California community colleges. Colleges vary in the range of offerings made available to students, the number of courses offered in sequence and likewise course/program parameters, and arrangement of parallel options. Consequently, different program configurations emerge upon analysis of programs and their structural features. Reasons for such variance may be related to college specific factors such as student body entrance scores and needs, adult education programs in the area, philosophy, goals, and mission of a given college.

In any event, different program configurations with various structural features and procedures have evolved. Certain differences do exist, but underlying commonalities are apparent as well in areas addressed in the study: (1) tests used, (2) range of offerings, grade level parameters, and status of courses offered, (3) typical program configuration, (4) entrance and exit criteria for reading courses, and (5) course content. Upon analysis of similarities and differences, further questions can be raised.

Tests Used for Placing Students in Reading Courses, Refining Initial Placement, and Placing Students in Other Subject Area Courses

Tests are used in all participating colleges to place students into different levels of reading courses. Those most commonly used include the **Nelson-Denny**, the **Stanford Diagnostic (Blue)**, and the **ASSET**. In terms of refining initial placement, the following tests were named most frequently in the survey: **Stanford Diagnostic (Blue)** and the **Nelson-Denny** although many others were noted as well. According to the surveys, many respondents

reported use of diagnostic tests for refining initial placement. It is to be expected that the diagnostic instruments selected will vary by instructor seeking to assess specific strengths and weaknesses. A wide variety of well-designed diagnostic tools are available to reading instructors who often devise their own diagnostic batteries consisting of a combination of tests/subtests appropriate for the students served.

Various tests are used as well for placing students in subject area coursework. The Nelson-Denny, the Stanford Diagnostic (Blue) and the ASSET are the most commonly used tests among the two-thirds of the sample colleges who use test data to place students in other subject area courses.

A question which can be raised, particularly about screening or survey instruments used for placement purposes is: *"Do some of the tests available on the market yield more accurate information than others, given similar or equally matched groups of students?"* In addition, one might ask: *"Are some of the tests more appropriate for certain student bodies than others?"* Furthermore, in terms of reading prerequisites used for recommending enrollment in other subject areas, a question which may be asked is: *"Do the reading prerequisites established for content area courses have an effect on course completion and grades attained in those courses?"*

Range of Offerings, Grade Level Parameters, and Status of Courses Offered

With regard to range of offerings, coursework is made available at the 8-10th grade level range by nearly all colleges, 93% according to the survey. In addition, 87% of the colleges offer reading courses at the 10-12th grade level range. A significant number of colleges also offer coursework at the 4-7th range, 84% as reported in the survey, and 77% of the colleges report coursework at the 0-4th grade level range as well. Only 45% of the colleges report coursework in speed reading and only 32% of the colleges report college level coursework in critical/analytical reading.

It is apparent that when a full range of offerings, 0 through college level, is not made available, courses at the college level and those at the lowest levels, 0-4th and 4-7th are omitted. Explaining the absence of college level courses might be some colleges' graduation requirements, low enrollments in college level reading courses requiring discontinuance, and/or college specific counseling procedures and matriculation plans in place.

It might be that at the lower levels, 0-7th grade level range, more coursework than that reported is actually offered. Through some follow-up phone contacts, it was learned that if coursework at the lowest level(s) was not offered through the regular reading program, it was not reported although in some colleges it was being offered through other program areas on campus such as adult education, learning disabled and/or ESL.

On the other hand, some of the colleges may simply not offer coursework at the lower levels and should perhaps reconsider their range of offerings. It must be noted that a large percentage of students taking reading courses through the regular reading programs do enter college scoring in the 0-7th grade level range, as evidenced in the *LARC : Student Outcomes Study In Reading*. This study indicates that "... of the largest test group, the Stanford Diagnostic group, 60% of the students in the total sample fell within the lowest level percentile group, compared to 25% of the national norming group of twelfth graders. The proportion of students in this lowest level group for all individual Stanford Diagnostic samples ranged from 39% to 99%. These California community college remedial reading students placed very low in reading ability relative to national twelfth graders. The proportions of students in this lowest level group for the eight NJBSCT colleges ranged from 11% to 65%. The colleges in the sample are very diverse, in this instance, according to student skills levels, as well as other student characteristics."

Such prescore results point to the general need for lower level offerings in the colleges' reading programs. If 60% of the students in the Outcomes Study scored in the 0-8.7 range, it might be valid for all colleges to take a close look at the reading offerings being provided to students at this level. Many of the students in the Outcomes Study scored between 0-7th grade level demonstrating a need for coursework beginning at a low level. A question

colleges must ask is: *"Are the reading offerings made available to students scoring in the lowest percentile range sufficient to meet their needs?"*

With regard to course parameters, some colleges offer a sequence of numerous courses, each of which spans a narrow grade level range while others report far fewer courses in a given sequence, each of which spans a wide grade level range. It might be suspected that the latter colleges pay less attention to homogeneity which usually results in more effective teaching, especially with large class sizes. Some of the wide grade level parameters for courses reported, however, may not accurately reflect the majority of students served in those courses. Typical enrollments in such courses may be far more homogeneous than might be expected, and special provisions may be made for the "outliers," a feature not addressed in the survey.

Finally, with regard to the type of credit associated with the various offerings, variance is apparent among the colleges offering coursework at the same/similar levels. Perhaps through the new Title V guidelines, fewer differences in this regard will be noted in the future.

Program Configuration

Different program configurations have evolved perhaps in some cases due to changing needs, limitations and/or type and size of facilities available, and emergence of individualized programs such as learning centers. Consequently, various combinations of reading offerings and options have been made available to students. It can be expected that a different blend of offerings would be campus specific and would emerge gradually based on campus requirements. It cannot be concluded that one configuration is superior to another without considering all important comparison variables related to reading programs, many of which were not addressed in the Curriculum Study.

Three major program configurations or models, however, did emerge. Reading programs offered in most reporting colleges correspond with the one of the models which are described as follows:

1. Model I -- **Individualized to Classroom Offerings.** Reading instruction is provided through individualized reading programs spanning the entire range, 0 through college level, and classroom or classroom-lab offerings are made available, usually beginning at the 8th or 10th grade level. Students who enter with low reading scores receive only individualized instruction in reading. Upon reaching the level of the first classroom offering in the sequence, students receive further reading instruction through that classroom offering; some of these students, however, may receive further reading instruction through the individualized reading program.

2. Model II -- **Classroom-lab and Individualized Instruction Spanning All Levels.** In this model, colleges offer reading instruction across the entire range, 0 through college, in both individualized and classroom based courses offering students flexibility and a greater number of options.

3. Model III -- **Classroom or Classroom-lab Instruction Only.** Some colleges offer reading coursework only through the classroom or classroom-lab. Reading coursework may not be available across all levels; offerings at the lowest level(s) and/or the college level may be omitted.

Fifty-seven percent of the 23 colleges which participated in both the LARC Student Outcomes Study and in this Curriculum Study in Reading offer programs which correspond with Models I and II involving individualized instruction in reading and classroom based offerings. Forty-three percent of the 23 colleges offer only classroom based instruction in reading. Some may have labs associated with their classroom offerings.

A question for further study which might be raised is: *"Given similar or matched groups of students, is one program configuration, including the blend of offerings or options, course parameters and range of offerings, more effective than another in terms of student gains and success in content area coursework taken later?"*

Entrance and Exit Criteria

Most of the California community colleges use assessment instruments for placement in reading courses and, in conjunction with departmental agreement, set exit standards for their courses. For entrance standards, the most commonly used instruments for placement are the **Nelson-Denny**, the **Stanford Diagnostic (Blue)** and the **ASSET**. For refining course placement, the **Nelson-Denny** and the **Stanford Diagnostic (Blue)** are also frequently used as well as a wide variety of other tests. Entrance cut-off scores initially used tend to correspond with the entrance levels or beginning grade level parameters specified for given courses. The scores on the placement instruments may be used as prescores for the courses in which students are actually placed. Upon further testing conducted to refine initial placement, any discrepancies between the placement score and early performance can be resolved. In some of the colleges, however, it appears that **much latitude is extended when placing students into specific reading courses with designated parameters.** A question which might be raised is: *"Would reading instruction be more effective if a closer match were reached between students' demonstrated performance and the beginning grade level parameters of the courses in which the students are placed?"*

In about half of the colleges, a posttest is also administered in reading courses. Usually, the posttest administered is an alternate form of the pretest. When an alternate form is used, gains are calculated by subtracting pretest from posttest scores. In some instances, posttests other than alternate forms of the pretests are used at the end of the course. In these situations, the amount of student gain is not measured, but students are expected to demonstrate an exit grade level or raw score in conjunction with other indices including satisfactory completion of course assignments and passing grades on course exams. Credit

for the course and confirmation that students have met specified criteria are based on the indices utilized for a particular course.

In some colleges, it appears that much latitude is also extended with regard to exit standards in terms of the reading levels demonstrated by students upon course completion and the end grade level parameters specified for courses. A question which can be raised is: *"Would reading instruction be more effective as well as performance in the course at the next level if a closer match were reached between the ending performance levels demonstrated by students and the end grade level parameters specified for the courses in which they were enrolled?"* And to address the issue of measuring gains, one might ask, *"Would reading instructors be in a better position to evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction if they measured the gains made by their students using the standardized instruments available?"*

In some colleges, the reading requirement for the AA/AS Degree often is successful completion of a reading-composition course which may or may not be the standard freshman composition course, and in some instances, a reading grade level must be demonstrated by the students prior to graduation. Not all colleges, however, specify a reading proficiency level which must be demonstrated on a standardized test prior to graduation. In terms of the AA/AS Degree, questions with regard to reading proficiency which can be asked are: *"Should a reading test be used to determine eligibility for the AA/AS Degree?" "If so, what test should be used, either through a testing service area or in the classroom upon completion of a course?" "What grade level/raw score should be attained to meet a graduation requirement?" "If course completion is used instead of a proficiency exam requiring a certain score/grade level, should the same/comparable test be used and the same proficiency level be required upon completion of the course?"*

Course Content

In general, much concurrence was found regarding course content emphasized at specified levels. In terms of skill areas receiving greatest focus, a large percentage of the colleges do emphasize three to six major areas appropriate for courses at specific levels. In fact, it

might be concluded that the skill areas emphasized are those expected for coursework at the levels reported. In college level reading courses, for example, instructors would be expected to incorporate much instruction on critical thinking, comprehension, fluency, figurative language, and some aspect(s) of study skills. In reading courses at the lowest level, 0-4, instructors would be expected to emphasize phonics or word attack and structural analysis subskills as well as vocabulary development, and to focus attention on spelling.

Although not specifically addressed in this study, reading instruction offered through ESL programs or other programs designed for special target groups might be mentioned as well. Questions which can be raised include: *"Is reading instruction incorporated in the sequence of courses offered through ESL programs?" "When reading instruction is incorporated at specific levels, are the features regarding sequence and rage of courses, program configuration, entrance and exit criteria, and skills treated the same as those incorporated in regular reading programs?"*

The methodologies, techniques, and materials used to teach these skills, however, probably vary widely as well as staffing patterns and contact hours scheduled for courses within various reading programs. Further investigation should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of specific teaching strategies, materials used, and the other variables related to the structural features of reading programs. Questions which should be asked addressing both classroom based and individualized reading programs include: *"What kinds of materials and equipment are utilized?" "What specific methodologies and techniques are incorporated in the reading instructional program?" "How many contact hours are required for reading courses at specified levels?" "Are aides and/or tutors used in addition to instructors?" "What is the staff/student ratio?" "What level of instructor and staff preparedness is required?" "Is progress regularly assessed?" "Do differences exist between the items on the assessment instruments used and those on the standardized reading tests given?" "What is the instructor loading in both settings?" "Are group sessions incorporated in the individualized reading programs, and are labs incorporated in the classroom based offerings?"* The same questions would apply also to ESL and other programs designed for specific target groups.

Finally, in order to gain a clearer picture of reading offerings made available to students in the California community colleges, the following questions might be raised: *"How many sections of each course are offered each semester?" "What is the maximum enrollment per section?" "Must reading courses at the specific colleges be taken concurrently with other essential skills courses such as those in writing, study skills, vocabulary, and spelling?" "Must some reading courses be taken prior to enrollment in certain content area courses for which minimum reading levels have been established, or may they be taken concurrently with those courses?"*

Through this Curriculum Study in Reading, LARC has examined the reading offerings made available to California community college students. The questions raised are similar to those addressed by instructors and administrators during program evaluation and review processes across the state. It is simply intended that this study encourage further examination by providing a general description of reading program structure and procedures enabling instructors to make comparisons on a general feature level. Carefully designed studies would be required to evaluate the most important comparison variables related to program quality and results. This study, however, enables reading instructors to make some comparisons in terms of structural features and content as they attempt to improve the offerings which they make available to students.

Appendix A

Survey for Research
In
Assessment/Placement/Curriculum Practices
In
California Community College
Reading Credit Classes

Deadline for return is May 1, 1987

SURVEY FOR RESEARCH IN
ASSESSMENT/PLACEMENT/CURRICULUM PRACTICES
IN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
READING [redacted] CREDIT CLASSES

College _____

Your Name _____ Title _____

READING

In order to assist us in comparing reading courses, please identify your courses as of fall 1987 using the following definitions. All the questions will be answered based on the following identification chart. Definitions do not include ESL.

DEFINITION/IDENTIFICATION OF CAMPUS READING COURSES

LEVEL I

1 — "College Reading" is parallel in skill level to Freshman Composition. This course is transferable and AA/AS Degree applicable.

Please list title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

LEVEL II

2 — "Preparatory Reading" is one level below Freshman Composition. This course is not transferable but it is AA/AS Degree applicable.

Please list title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

LEVEL III

3 — "Basic Skills Reading 3" is two levels below College Reading. It may or may not be a credit course.

Please list and check title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

Course	Credit, Degree Applicable	Credit, Non-AA/AS Degree Applicable	Non Credit
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

What is the reading grade level range for this course? _____
Is writing an equal component of this course? Yes _____ No _____

LEVEL IV

4 — "Basic Skills Reading 4" is three levels below College Reading. It may or may not be a credit course.

Please list and check title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

Course	Credit, Degree Applicable	Credit, Non-AA/AS Degree Applicable	Non Credit
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

What is the reading grade level range for this course? _____
Is writing an equal component of this course? Yes _____ No _____

LEVEL V

5 — "Basic Skills Reading 5" is four levels below College Reading.

Please list and check title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

Course	Credit, Degree Applicable	Credit, Non-AA/AS Degree Applicable	Non Credit
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

What is the reading grade level range for this course? _____
Is writing an equal component of this course? Yes _____ No _____

LEVEL(S) BELOW V

Please label and describe any credit reading course(s) you may offer below Basic Skills Reading 5:

Course	Credit, Degree Applicable	Credit, Non-AA/AS Degree Applicable	Non Credit

Assessment Instruments used for Placement
in California Community College
English Composition Courses

(Reading)

PLEASE CHECK THE TEST(S) THAT ARE USED FOR ENTRY LEVEL ASSESSMENT IN PLACING STUDENTS IN YOUR READING COURSES.

TEST	This test is used for placement in which reading courses? (Circle all that apply)	This test is used to refine initial placement in which of the following courses? (Circle all that apply)	Is this test used for placement (requisite) in other subject area courses? (Please check)
VEST - Valley English Skills Test	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Stanford TASK	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Stanford Diagnostic (Blue)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
SCAT (School and College Ability Tests)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
New Jersey Basic Skills	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Nelson-Denny	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Minnesota Reading	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
McGraw Hill	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
MAPS (Multiple Assessment Programs and Services)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Iowa Test of Educational Development	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____

TEST	This test is used for placement in which reading courses? (Circle all that apply)	This test is used to refine initial placement in which of the following courses? (Circle all that apply)	Is this test used for placement (requisite) in other subject area courses? (Please check)
Gates MacGinitie	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Degrees of Reading Power	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Ocop Expression	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Comparative Guidance Placement (CGP)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Community College Assessment/Placement Test	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
CAT (California Achievement Test)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
ASSET (Assessment of Skills for Successful Entry and Transfer	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
ABLE (Adult Basic Learning Exam)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
Others: (Please specify)			
_____	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
_____	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
_____	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____
_____	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, below 5	Yes ____ No ____

ENTRY CRITERIA

COLLEGE READING (1)
LEVEL I

"College Reading" is parallel in skill level to Freshman Composition. This course is transferable and AA/AS Degree applicable.

Please list title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

1. What entry assessment do you use for this class?

2. Do you pretest the students in this class? Yes ____ No ____

   If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

   Instrument(s) _____

   Cut-off (raw score) _____
   (percentile) _____
   (grade level) _____

3. Do you post-test the students in this class? Yes ____ No ____

   If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

   Instrument(s) _____

   Cut-off (raw score) _____
   (percentile) _____
   (grade level) _____

4. If you pre-test and post-test, do you use this information to measure and report skill growth? Yes ____ No ____

   ____ Measure
   ____ Report To Whom? _____

EXIT CRITERIA

COLLEGE READING (1)
LEVEL I

"College Reading" is parallel in skill level to Freshman Composition. This course is transferable and AA/AS Degree applicable.

1. Who determines the exit standards for this course?

   Individual Instructor _____
   Department _____
   Other (please specify) _____ _____

2. What are your exit standards for this course?

3. If you do use a common exit test:

   A. Must a student pass to proceed to the next reading course?
   Yes _____ No _____

   B. Is the exit test the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level?
   Yes _____ No _____

   C. May exceptions be made based on instructor judgement?
   Yes _____ No _____
   (explain)_____

   D. What is considered a passing grade on the test?
   Letter grade A _____ Percentage_____ Numerical Pass_____
   B _____ Based on a
   C _____ range of_____
   D _____

   E. What grade is required to proceed to the next course in the sequence?
   A _____
   B _____
   C _____
   D _____

4. Indicate the percentage of the total grade that is based on each of the following criteria: (Estimate for your department even if there are differences among instructors.)

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
a. Department exit test (Please describe — i.e. holistically corrected essay)	_____	_____

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
b. In-class written essays and assignments	_____	_____
c. In-class objective quizzes and exams	_____	_____
d. In-class participation	_____	_____
e. Other (explain)	_____	_____

5. Is this standard uniform for all College Reading courses?

	Yes	No
Offered in day	_____	_____
Offered in evening	_____	_____
On-Campus	_____	_____
Off-Campus	_____	_____

6. How are the reading requirements for the AA/AS Degree met?

   _____ a. Course completion only
   (course(s)_____
   (_____
   _____ b. Proficiency exam only
   (exam _____
   (raw score_____
   (percentile_____
   (grade level_____
   _____ c. a and b
   _____ d. a or b

ENTRY CRITERIA

PREPARATORY READING (2)
LEVEL II

"Preparatory Reading" is one level below Freshman Composition. This course is not transferable but it is AA/AS Degree applicable.

Please list title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

1. What entry assessment do you use for this class?

2. Do you pretest the students in this class? Yes ____ No ____

   If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

   Instrument(s) _____

   Cut-off (raw score) _____
   (percentile) _____
   (grade level) _____

3. Do you post-test the students in this class? Yes ____ No ____

   If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

   Instrument(s) _____

   Cut-off (raw score) _____
   (percentile) _____
   (grade level) _____

4. If you pre-test and post-test, do you use this information to measure and report skill growth? Yes ____ No ____

   ____ Measure
   ____ Report To Whom? _____

EXIT CRITERIA

PREPARATORY READING (2)
LEVEL II

"Preparatory Reading" is one level below Freshman Composition. This course is not transferable but it is AA/AS Degree applicable.

1. Who determines the exit standards for this course?

   Individual Instructor ____
   Department ____
   Other (please specify) ____ _____

2. What are your exit standards for this course?

3. If you do use a common exit test:

   A. Must a student pass to proceed to the next reading course? Yes ____ No ____

   B. Is the exit test the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level? Yes ____ No ____

   C. May exceptions be made based on instructor judgement? Yes ____ No ____

      (explain) _____

   D. What is considered a passing grade on the test?
      Letter grade A ____ Percentage____ Numerical Pass____
      B ____ Based on a
      C ____ range of_____
      D ____

   E. What grade is required to proceed to the next course in the sequence?
      A ____
      B ____
      C ____
      D ____

4. Indicate the percentage of the total grade that is based on each of the following criteria: (Estimate for your department even if there are differences among instructors.)

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
a. Department exit test (Please describe — i.e. holistically corrected essay)	____	_____

Exit Criteria, Preparatory Reading (2), Continued

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
b. In-class written essays and assignments	_____	_____
c. In-class objective quizzes and exams	_____	_____
d. In-class participation	_____	_____
e. Other (explain)	_____	_____

5. Is this standard uniform for all Preparatory Reading courses?

	Yes	No
Offered in day	_____	_____
Offered in evening	_____	_____
On-Campus	_____	_____
Off-Campus	_____	_____

6. How are the reading requirements for the AA/AS Degree met?

_____ a. Course completion only (course(s)_____

(_____

_____ b. Proficiency exam only (

(exam _____

(raw score _____

(percentile _____

(grade level _____

_____ c. a and b

_____ d. a or b

ENTRY CRITERIA

BASIC SKILLS READING (3)
LEVEL III

"Basic Skills Reading 3" is two levels below College Reading. It may or may not be a credit course.

Please list title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

1. What entry assessment do you use for this class?

2. Do you pretest the students in this class? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

Instrument(s) _____

Cut-off (raw score) _____
(percentile) _____
(grade level) _____

3. Do you post-test the students in this class? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

Instrument(s) _____

Cut-off (raw score) _____
(percentile) _____
(grade level) _____

4. If you pre-test and post-test, do you use this information to measure and report skill growth? Yes _____ No _____

_____ Measure
_____ Report To Whom? _____

EXIT CRITERIA

BASIC SKILLS READING (3)
LEVEL III

"Basic Skills Reading 3" is two levels below College Reading. It may or may not be a credit course.

1. Who determines the exit standards for this course?

   Individual Instructor _____
   Department _____
   Other (please specify) _____ _____

2. What are your exit standards for this course?

3. If you do use a common exit test:

   A. Must a student pass to proceed to the next reading course?
      Yes _____ No _____

   B. Is the exit test the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level?
      Yes _____ No _____

   C. May exceptions be made based on instructor judgement?
      Yes _____ No _____
      (explain)_____

   D. What is considered a passing grade on the test?
      Letter grade A _____ Percentage_____ Numerical Pass_____
      B _____ Based on a
      C _____ range of_____
      D _____

   E. What grade is required to proceed to the next course in the sequence?
      A _____
      B _____
      C _____
      D _____

4. Indicate the percentage of the total grade that is based on each of the following criteria: (Estimate for your department even if there are differences among instructors.)

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
a. Department exit test (Please describe — i.e. holistically corrected essay)	_____	_____

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
b. In-class written essays and assignments	_____	_____
c. In-class objective quizzes and exams	_____	_____
d. In-class participation	_____	_____
e. Other (explain)	_____	_____

5. Is this standard uniform for all Basic Skills Reading courses?

	Yes	No
Offered in day	_____	_____
Offered in evening	_____	_____
On-Campus	_____	_____
Off-Campus	_____	_____

6. How are the reading requirements for the AA/AS Degree met?

   _____ a. Course completion only (course(s)_____
   (_____
   _____ b. Proficiency exam only (exam _____
   (raw score_____
   (percentile_____
   _____ c. a and b (grade level_____
   _____ d. a or b

ENTRY CRITERIA

BASIC SKILLS READING (4)
LEVEL IV

"Basic Skills Reading 4" is three levels below College Reading. It may or may not be a credit course.

Please list title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

1. What entry assessment do you use for this class?

2. Do you pretest the students in this class? Yes ____ No ____

   If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

   Instrument(s) _____

   Cut-off (raw score) _____
   (percentile) _____
   (grade level) _____

3. Do you post-test the students in this class? Yes ____ No ____

   If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

   Instrument(s) _____

   Cut-off (raw score) _____
   (percentile) _____
   (grade level) _____

4. If you pre-test and post-test, do you use this information to measure and report skill growth? Yes ____ No ____

   ____ Measure
   ____ Report To Whom? _____

EXIT CRITERIA

BASIC SKILLS READING (4)
LEVEL IV

"Basic Skills Reading 4" is three levels below College Reading. It may or may not be a credit course.

1. Who determines the exit standards for this course?

   Individual Instructor ____
   Department ____
   Other (please specify) ____ _____

2. What are your exit standards for this course?

3. If you do use a common exit test:

   A. Must a student pass to proceed to the next reading course? Yes ____ No ____

   B. Is the exit test the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level? Yes ____ No ____

   C. May exceptions be made based on instructor judgement? Yes ____ No ____
   (explain) _____

   D. What is considered a passing grade on the test?
   Letter grade A ____ Percentage____ Numerical Pass____
   B ____ Based on a
   C ____ range of_____
   D ____

   E. What grade is required to proceed to the next course in the sequence?
   A ____
   B ____
   C ____
   D ____

4. Indicate the percentage of the total grade that is based on each of the following criteria: (Estimate for your department even if there are differences among instructors.)

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
a. Department exit test (Please describe — i.e. holistically corrected essay)	_____	_____

Exit Criteria, Basic Skills Reading (4), Continued

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
b. In-class written essays and assignments	_____	_____
c. In-class objective quizzes and exams	_____	_____
d. In-class participation	_____	_____
e. Other (explain)	_____	_____

5. Is this standard uniform for all Basic Skills Reading courses?

	Yes	No
Offered in day	_____	_____
Offered in evening	_____	_____
On-Campus	_____	_____
Off-Campus	_____	_____

6. How are the reading requirements for the AA/AS Degree met?

_____ a. Course completion only (course(s)_____

(_____

_____ b. Proficiency exam only (

(exam _____

(raw score_____

(percentile_____

_____ c. a and b (grade level_____

_____ d. a or b

ENTRY CRITERIA

BASIC SKILLS READING (5)
LEVEL V

"Basic Skills Reading 5" is four levels below College Reading.

Please list title(s)/number(s) of your comparable course(s) here:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

1. What entry assessment do you use for this class?

2. Do you pretest the students in this class? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

Instrument(s) _____

Cut-off (raw score) _____
(percentile) _____
(grade level) _____

3. Do you post-test the students in this class? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, could you describe what instrument(s) you use and what cut-off criteria you use?

Instrument(s) _____

Cut-off (raw score) _____
(percentile) _____
(grade level) _____

4. If you pre-test and post-test, do you use this information to measure and report skill growth? Yes _____ No _____

_____ Measure
_____ Report To Whom? _____

EXIT CRITERIA

BASIC SKILLS READING (5)
LEVEL V

"Basic Skills Reading 5" is four levels below College Reading.

1. Who determines the exit standards for this course?

   Individual Instructor _____
   Department _____
   Other (please specify) _____ _____

2. What are your exit standards for this course?

3. If you do use a common exit test:

   A. Must a student pass to proceed to the next reading course?
      Yes _____ No _____

   B. Is the exit test the sole measure for allowing movement to the next level?
      Yes _____ No _____

   C. May exceptions be made based on instructor judgement?
      Yes _____ No _____
      (explain)_____

   D. What is considered a passing grade on the test?
      Letter grade A _____ Percentage_____ Numerical Pass_____
      B _____ Based on a
      C _____ range of_____
      D _____

   E. What grade is required to proceed to the next course in the sequence?
      A _____
      B _____
      C _____
      D _____

4. Indicate the percentage of the total grade that is based on each of the following criteria: (Estimate for your department even if there are differences among instructors.)

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
a. Department exit test (Please describe — i.e. holistically corrected essay)	_____	_____

Criteria	Percentage of Grade	Describe
b. In-class written essays and assignments	_____	_____
c. In-class objective quizzes and exams	_____	_____
d. In-class participation	_____	_____
e. Other (explain)	_____	_____

5. Is this standard uniform for all Basic Skills Reading courses?

	Yes	No
Offered in day	_____	_____
Offered in evening	_____	_____
On-Campus	_____	_____
Off-Campus	_____	_____

6. How are the reading requirements for the AA/AS Degree met?

   _____ a. Course completion only (course(s)_____
   (_____
   _____ b. Proficiency exam only (exam _____
   (raw score_____
   (percentile_____
   _____ c. a and b (grade level_____
   _____ d. a or b

PLEASE CHECK THE MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF EACH OF YOUR READING COURSES. A MAJOR OBJECTIVE MAY BE DEFINED AS AT LEAST TAKING TWO LECTURE HOURS FOR PRESENTATION AND PRACTICE.

	(1) College Reading	(2) Preparatory Reading	(3) BASIC	(4) SKILLS	(5)
PHONICS					
Review of Phonics					
Word Attack Skills					
Structural Analysis					
- Syllabification					
- Affixes					
VOCABULARY					
Multiple Meanings					
In Context					
Homonyms					
Synonyms					
Compound Words					
Affixes					
Roots					
Parts of Speech					
FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE					
SPELLING					
Internal Patterns					
Endings					
Parts of Speech					
Commonly Misspelled					
Capitalization					
COMPREHENSION					
SQ3R or DRTA					
Levels of Understanding & Questioning (Concrete, Figurative, Judgmental, Appreciative)					
Similarities					
Differences					
Sequencing					
Categorization					
Paragraph Structure					

	(1) College Reading	(2) Preparatory Reading	(3) BASIC	(4) SKILLS	(5)
COMPREHENSION (Continued)					
Main Idea					
Methods of Support					
Predicting Outcomes					
CRITICAL THINKING					
Empirical Verification					
Evaluative					
Conceptual Relationships					
GRAMMAR & MECHANICS					
Parts of Speech					
Sentence Patterns					
Punctuation					
FLUENCY					
Skimming					
Scanning					
Eye Patterns					
Adjusted Rate					
STUDY SKILLS					
Notetaking					
Outlining					
Test Taking Techniques					
What percentage of this course is devoted to teaching writing skills?	____%	____%	____%	____%	____%

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